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[DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.]

GRAND COURT.

BY THE

Author of "Sometimes Sapphire, Sometimes Pale," &c.

CHAPTER XI.

Upon the eye-balls murderous tyranny
Sits, in grim majesty, to fright the world.
This is the man should do the bloody deed;
The image of a wicked, heinous fault
Lives in his eye. *Shakespeare*

VIOLA and Norah exchanged a glance, a look pregnant with a terrible anxiety:

"What are we to do?" the look expressed. "Are we to cast ourselves upon the compassion of the crowd, or shall we try to escape from our enemies?"

They were almost hemmed in now, despite their lowered heads, their silence, the rapidity with which they had moved, and the quietness of their travelling dresses, there was a certain air of *ton* about the girls which marked them out. Their high breeding showed itself in their every gesture.

"Stop those ladies in black!" cried Rokewood.

At that moment, the man who held the shafts of the truck, loaded with luggage, moved it out of their way; they rushed on, and a few steps brought them close to Hammond.

"I knew you must come here," said the young man. "All the passengers pass down these steps."

"Help us! help us! he is after us!" gasped Norah.

Hammond needed no second bidding; the sisters accepted each an arm, and the three descended the steps slowly, on account of the press, but so far uncaught by Rokewood. Indeed the secretary had lost sight of them in the press, although they heard his voice still raised in accents wrathful, and almost agonised, in their rear. At the foot of the stairs was a man who held a gate, and demanded tickets. The twins gazed at one another in horror.

"We are lost!" said Norah; "I forgot that Rokewood holds our tickets."

The purse of Hammond was out in an instant, and he hastily put down the two gold pieces, the price of their railway journey; Norah's heart swelled with gratitude, as much as with humiliated pride; they passed on, and then suddenly out into the blessed freedom of the street.

The night air was blowing a cool, fresh, autumn wind, there were numbers of cabs on the stand. Hammond hastened to one of them.

"Where shall I tell him to drive to?" he asked of Lady Norah, in a tone of tender respect.

"To Imperial Lodge, Kensington Gardens," replied Norah, in a tremulous voice.

The order was given.

"Am I to accompany you?" asked Hammond, wistfully.

Long afterwards, in bitterness of spirit, Norah regretted the excess of prudery which, made up partly of timidity, partly of pride, partly too of a certain shrinking from a new feeling which was gradually taking possession of her heart, and filling her whole nature, impelled her to thank poor Hammond warmly, but to dispense with his farther services.

"Colonel Claverhouse is a cousin of papa's," she said, "but he is nearly a stranger to us. We are going to him; but it would be a little odd for us to introduce you, he might—"

And the earl's daughter paused in a sweet, rosy, maiden confusion.

Hammond bowed deeply, almost to the earth.

"I am sorry I have been of so little use—" he began.

"Oh, we are under the deepest obligations to you, Mr. Danvers!" cried the twin sisters in a breath. "We will write to you."

Then Hammond shut the door of the cab, and the sisters were whirled off towards Kensington. It was a long drive, and the hour was late. The inexperienced girls never calculated upon anything save an immediate reception, kind and welcoming, from the colonel of hussars.

At length the cab drew up in front of the great town mansion. There was a short drive up to the door, and the gravel scrunched under the wheels of

the cab, while a clock over the coachhouse, a fanciful building to the left, sounded the hour of one.

"How late," said Viola, with a shudder, "and how cold the wind is."

The cabman descended and pulled the house-bell. It rang with so sharp a sound, that the echoes came to the ears of Viola and Norah in the cab.

"How like a sleeping face it looks, with its shuttered windows," said Norah, "and those great white blinds at the top. I hope that Colonel Claverhouse has not gone to bed."

The echoes of the great sound died away, but there was no response whatever.

"Everybody is in bed and asleep," said Viola.

"Oh, how I wish Mr. Danvers was with us; he would tell us what to do. Ring again, please," she said to the man.

He rang again more loudly than before. Just as the echoes were dying away, a window at the top was thrown up, and a voice said:

"What's the matter?"

"Oh, we have come to stay with Colonel Claverhouse," said Norah. "We are Lord Monkhouse's daughters."

"Colonel Claverhouse and his family started for Italy last week," responded the man. "The house is left in the charge of some of the servants."

Dismay, like unto despair, laid hold on the twins.

"But please to let us in for to-night," said Norah. "We have come up from Grand Court by a night train."

There was apparently a brief conversation held upstairs, but the aristocratic tones of Norah's proud, clear young voice, carried conviction to the servant-man.

In a short time the bolts were withdrawn. Norah paid the cabman; then the sisters left the cab, and passed under the portico, and so on, through the door and into the hall—a large one, paved with alternate squares of black and white marble; in the centre was a rich carpet, couches of violet velvet were arranged here and there; the ceiling was painted in gold-framed medallions from scripture subjects. Colonel Claverhouse was a stern old Cal-

violin, and admitted no subjects to be represented in his house, save those religious or historical.

"No luggage, my lady?" said the man, in a tone of surprise.

"It was left at the station with the luggage of people whom we have parted from," replied Viola, speaking quickly. "We will not trouble you for anything to-night. We can sleep in either of the rooms."

The man looked with a puzzled, perplexed air at the two beautiful young creatures.

"You are surprised at the daughters of the Earl of Monkhouse arriving late in the night, without luggage, and unconscious of the departure of Colonel Claverhouse," said Norah. "You may well be astonished; but you have heard that papa had secretly married. Well, we have escaped from our stepmother. Will you not help us?"

The man was a red-faced, red-haired personage, with a stupid, rather ill-tempered face.

"I wish to do what is right," he said, and there Miles Norton spoke truly; stupidity was his chief misfortune, ill-temper his chief fault, but he was an honest man, who meant well.

"Shall I show your ladyships into the dining-room?" he said: "and I will bring you some wine, and the round of cold beef."

The sisters thanked him heartily; they were nearly starving, after their day of meagre fare.

They crossed the hall into the large dining-room. "The carpets are up, ladies," said Norton, apologetically; "but the house is to be thoroughly cleaned while the family are away."

He lighted two lamps in the chandelier as he spoke, then he brought from the sideboard a cloth, knives, forks, a large round of cold beef, a loaf, a bottle of wine, and a large dish of grapes and peaches.

The sisters ate with intense relish; never had the luxurious viands of their father's table tasted more delicious than the plain fare which Norton set before them.

When they had finished, the man respectfully preceded them to a door, which he pushed open, and giving the light to Norah,

"There are no women servants sleeping in this house, my lady," he said, "but that is a room which was put straight yesterday, and I hope you will find it comfortable."

Then he withdrew, and the sisters entered the large chamber.

It was a grand, but gloomy room; a heavy bedstead of carved oak, with a high canopy of dark crimson velvet, stood in the centre, there were toilette services, large ewers, filled with water, the finest and whitest of towels, scented soaps, hair brushes. In fact, while they had been at supper, Norton had employed himself in arranging the room for the young ladies.

The sisters partly undressed, and then sought repose in the luxurious bed; they were worn out with fatigue, and they slept deeply until late on the following morning; then they arose, dressed, and, passing out of the bedchamber, found their way to the dining-room.

And now Norah rang the bell.

Norton answered the summons.

"Might we trouble you for a little breakfast?" she asked, gently.

There was a downcast look on Norton's face as he withdrew.

Norah had been standing looking at a picture, representing Marie Antoinette imploring the pity of the grocer's wife at Varennes, with the little Dauphin clinging to her skirt; therefore, when she turned round smiling to ask for breakfast; her thoughts were still with that representation of fallen royalty, but Lady Viola, watching the face of Colonel Claverhouse's steward from where she sat in an embrasure of a window, started to her feet when he had left the room, and called upon her sister in a paroxysm of terror:

"Norah, Norah! I am quite certain that man knows everything, and I think he has turned against us. I read such a severe, hard look in his sullen face."

"Nonsense, child! you are nervous," said Norah, with a smile; "but at all events, when we have had our breakfast, we will order a cab and go to Grosvenor Square, to Lady Flamburgh's, my god-mamma."

"They are all away—everybody is away. You forget, Norah, this is the month of September; people are all either at the sea, or on the continent. I don't believe we have a single acquaintance in town, except Philip."

Norah smiled.

"Well, then, I must write from here to all of them, but above all, to our rector, Mr. Somers; I feel sure that he will take us into his house."

"I am afraid he will be alarmed at Rokewood; I know the vicar is a very timid man," said Viola.

At that juncture Norton entered with the breakfast things—the coffee, rolls, and dressed mushrooms, the cold beef, and delicate dry toast were excellent, and the twins ate heartily.

"Make your mind easy," said Norah to Viola, "we will place ourselves under proper protection before long. I know that Colonel Claverhouse will be delighted to hear that we have used his house. I must give Norton a sovereign, and I will write to the rector after breakfast."

At this juncture Norton entered and began to clear away the breakfast things. Viola asked him, in a voice which trembled a little, if he would be kind enough to let them have pens and ink and some note-paper, since they had letters to write.

Norton brought all she required, and forthwith Norah sat down, and began to write to the rector. She wrote away rapidly for some time, then she read aloud to her sister what she had written.

"My dear, kind friend," she began, "I feel sure you will be grieved to hear that poor Viola and myself are staying at the house of papa's cousin, Colonel Claverhouse, with the steward and a few other servants (for the colonel is abroad), simply because we have no place to call home; and because our lives are in imminent danger while under the same roof with our wicked guardian, Mr. Rokewood, whom I am prepared to denounce before the whole world as a ruffian, and a would-be murderer."

At this moment there sounded a certain heavy measured tread in the marble hall, outside.

The twins stared at each other in amazed fear.

Viola started to her feet, and instantly Rokewood stood in the room, with his diabolical sneer upon his mustached lip. He advanced to the table, pulled the sheet of note-paper from Norah's hand, tore it into three or four strips, and cast them on the floor. Then he gave his great gray moustache a pull, and his eyes fastened themselves on the white face of Norah.

"A very lively and energetic young lady, truly," he said; "quite a 'girl of the period,' but I believe we must curb a little of this exuberant display of spirits. To run away from your mamma and your guardian at the Paddington Terminus at twelve o'clock at night, and to enter a cab escorted by a young man—one of your country flames, I suppose, or was it that wild, harum-scarum son of old Sir Brooke Danvers? Well, I must admit you outwitted me last night, but it must never happen again."

Norah stood, her large eyes dilating until they looked jet black with the increased size of the pupils. Her colour came back to her faintly at last, and dyed each cheek with a blush-rose tinting. But Viola sank weeping down upon the very floor, where she sat in a paroxysm of mingled fear, passion, and wild despair.

"You are the leading spirit, young lady," continued Rokewood, with a laugh, that sounded satanic, "and your weaker sister suffers for your imprudence."

"How did you find us out?" asked Norah, "Oh, nothing so easy. I saw the postman take your letter for this house, and when you eluded me so cleverly at the station, I felt sure that you had followed the letter. This morning I came here, and found that my surmise was quite correct. I have been in the house since seven o'clock—now it is eleven."

And he drew out his gold watch, all flashing with a diamond monogram, then put it in his pocket.

"Papa's watch," said Norah, bitterly.

"Mine now, since the countess presented it to me," said the secretary; but he set his teeth, and his evil face grew livid.

"You will not leave here without being well guarded," said Rokewood. "Really I should not like to trust myself alone with two such ladies. I fear you will find your prison rules grow stricter. It is always the case when criminals attempt to escape!"

"Criminals!" cried Lady Norah, in a voice quivering with indignation. "If there be a criminal here it is yourself."

"I will not permit even your tongue such license, fair lady; if you continue such impertinence I must have a little gag made for you especially!"

"Norah! Norah!" cried Viola, who was indulging in a perfect tempest of sobs on the floor. "Norah! Norah! I wish—I wish somebody would kill that man—it would be only like Charlotte Corday killing Murat, everybody praised her for—ridding the world of a monster. This man is as bad as Murat."

"Mademoiselle Corday paid for her nice little act of heroism with her blood," said Rokewood, turning sharply to Viola. "You may come to a like fate if you indulge in such wicked tempers," and he smiled a provoking smile. "I can't think what has become of all your saintlike meekness, Lady Viola. I always thought you a most gentle young person. Your sister was ever proud as Lucifer, and as spirited as a young

war-horse, but I doubt that a few months at Cumber-ton Grange will break her in. She will run in harness after the French governess has had her under tuition."

"Viola," said Norah, "I will make a covenant with you—let us agree not to address one word to this person; as long as he remains with us, we will reply only by a contemptuous silence; if he talks it shall be to deaf ears, to the winds, to the chairs and tables if he likes, but never to the daughters of the Earl of Monkhouse. Will you agree?"

"With all my heart," cried Viola.

Rokewood took the wrist of Norah in his butcher-like hand, and grasped it violently.

"Can you feel that?" he asked.

She did not answer, though she winced with the pain, and the brutal secretary repeated the experiment.

"Oh, stop, Mr. Rokewood! You will break her wrist, stop, stop!" cried Viola in an agony.

He pushed Norah from him and laughed: "at least, I have extorted a sentence from the murderously-inclined Viola, who emulates pretty Miss Charlotte Corday. As for you," and he scowled on the silent Norah, whose wrist was encircled with a livid mark, "as for you, your punishment is yet to come. I undertake to arrange for all that."

But Norah remained silent; only her large eyes sought her sister.

"Don't cry, Viola," she said; "it will make your head ache."

"And now, if you will permit me, I will send in Granger to assist you in cloaking yourselves. The cab waits at the door."

The sisters looked at one another in dismay.

"Escape is impossible, now," said Norah; and immediately Granger, prim, sober, neat and trim, entered the room and curtsied to the young ladies.

Norah nodded haughtily.

"So you have found us out!" said Viola. "Oh, Granger, some day you will be sorry for this."

"None of us can read the future, my lady," said Granger. "At present, my duty is to obey my master, and he is Mr. Rokewood."

"Is Taylor in the hall, and Grant by the cab?"

"Yes, sir," responded Granger.

"Well and good. Now, ladies, understand," said Rokewood, again pulling the flashing, jewelled watch from his pocket, "I give you five minutes to get your things on; if you attempt any scene in the street, I shall call a policeman, and we will have you locked up. Remember that you are in my power. Fate has been propitious in sending the colonel to Italy. I thought I might have had some trouble with him."

When the sisters had put on their cloaks and hats, and were crossing the hall, they saw Miles Norton slouching under an abutment of the grand staircase.

"Norton," said Norah, in a clear voice, holding a sovereign towards him, "accept this in acknowledgment of our gratitude for your hospitality in the colonel's absence. We are willing to believe that you have not willingly given us over into the power of our enemies. If you hear soon that we are both dead, Norton, will you remember that I warned you here in this hall; and will you tell Colonel Claverhouse to make strict inquiries?"

"Ah, ah," interrupted Rokewood, in a loud voice of fury, "that little arrangement called a gag will have to be seen to, I am afraid. Come on, madam," and he drew the arm of Norah within his own, "I will not consent to have this style of tragedy queen represented at all."

Norton put up his hands in deprecation of Norah's thanks, and in emphatic refusal of the gold piece.

"Heaven grant I have done right, my lady," said the man. "I was told you were wild young ladies, and ought to be with your ma and the governess; and coming here at one in the morning—what could I think?"

Norah's proud face, before pale as death, now crimsoned deeply, but curling her lip scornfully, she passed on to the cab, which was waiting at the front entrance.

Two men-servants and Granger were in attendance, as well as Mr. Rokewood.

The poor twins were well guarded. Rokewood, Granger and the young ladies occupied the inside of the cab, one man-servant sat outside, the other was told to keep the cab in sight, since it was to drive slowly.

And then the wheels rumbled over the gravel stones, and the twins were whirled off to a new prison.

CHAPTER XII.

The miserable have no other medicine
But only hope. *Shakespeare.*

PHILIP RUTHVEN occupied quiet apartments in Adam Street, a row of houses which turns off from the roar of the Strand, like those who wish to escape

the turmoil of the busy world for a space, and to gain respite from the clamour of the times. The young gentleman was entered at Guy's as a medical student. All his lectures and examinations, all his long terms of hard study and feverish anxiety, all the temptations which beset a young man in a great city lay about him and before him. Besides all this, Philip was poor, very poor. He had passed a bitter childhood among strangers, who had been kind to him. He never knew who it was who paid for the food he ate, the clothes he wore. He went to a school in the neighbourhood of London, until he was nearly sixteen, then his guardian, a dark, saturnine man, whom he had never seen more than twice in his life, came to the house of the master, and requested to see Ruthven. The youth was called, and he was, in stern tones, asked to choose his profession.

He answered, with a wisdom beyond his years, that he was not yet capable of judging on a point so important. Whereupon the guardian informed him that he would be placed with a clergyman in a distant county, that he might study classics for the next three years. Philip was soon afterwards domiciled with the good rector Somers.

Ruthven was a young man of bright ability; he soon distanced his comrades in the rector's classroom. He was handsome, bold, daring, ambitious, but high-principled, generous, and affectionate. The kindness and goodness of the Somerses won his heart completely; and a happier, merrier young fellow than Philip could hardly have been found, until Lady Viola Beaumont came with her sister, and their fashionable *chaperone*, to play croquet at the rector's house. Then the young man's poetic fancy was fired, and he fell desperately in love with that delicate creature, with her large hazel eyes, and blush rose complexion, and wavy curls of chestnut hair. Viola seemed to the enthusiastic Ruthven like a being out of another sphere.

"I am a fool," he would say, passionately, to himself, while pacing his chamber, "to dream of that exquisite creature; I, that am little better than a beggar; I that must work my way up through difficulty and trial; I who am doomed to spend the bright years of my youth in toil, in striving, in climbing the weary upward path; I who must bear the burden and heat of the day—to whom youth will scarcely be youth, by reason of trial and work. I, to dream of a Lady Beaumont, a fairy-like being, whose feet must tread on velvet, whose limbs must rest on eider down, whose dishes must be of gold, whose lovely brow, her father expects to see, doubtless, encircled by a coronet one day. I, to dream of her—I am a mad fool!"

But these trains of thought had not compelled Philip into a wiser course; they had not crushed out the plant of love which had taken root in his soul—on the contrary, the plant grew stronger and stronger, until all his thoughts were clothed with the luxuriant flowers of his fancy—passion flowers, those crimson roses of Shiraz, which shed their fragrance over his whole spiritual nature.

Ruthven wrote passionate poems in praise of Viola—at last encouraged by a downcast look in the maiden's eyes, he ventured to speak of his love. After that he was led on from hope to hope, until the reader saw him, in a former part of this story, disguised as an Italian organ-player, and talking to the twins on the terrace at Grand Court.

His cool reception had driven him nearly frantic; he went to London, cursing his own folly, and the pride of the aristocracy, but the reader may imagine with what reception he received the letter which Viola wrote to him, and poor Norah posted at the peril of her life.

Then arose hope, bright and strong as a sun on the horizon of his life, and his ambition arose like a refreshed giant from its slumber of a week; for there was hope, tenderness, pity, in the epistle of his beloved—all the elements that make up love—and Philip felt that love was there, hiding his rosy face with blushing shame—under the cover of pretended sympathy and gentle apology.

"She loves me," cried Philip, in ecstasy; "and now come what may, I will fight life's battle and make myself worthy of her. I will write my name among the great English surgeons, who have done so much for humanity. I will win wealth, fame, honours."

The deep gray eyes sparkled, the handsome head was held higher.

"With the hope of her before me," mused the eager student, "I can achieve wonders."

The long years—ah, the long years—that lay between him and that time of honour, he paused not to think of them. For a day he idled—he sat at home, in Adam Street, and thought about his lady-love. Little did he dream of the cruel plot against her life—little did he think that Viola was a miserable prisoner, while he was surrounding her in fancy with all the luxuries and splendours of Grand Court.

On the very morning that the twins were driving

slowly across London, towards Grosvenor Square, where was the great town mansion of the false countess, Philip was sauntering along the streets, his heart full of hope, his mind teeming with happy thoughts.

Suddenly he raised his eyes, for what purpose he hardly knew, and there, looking out of the window of a cab, was the pale, tearful face of Viola. She held out her hands to him imploringly, but the cab rolled on, and left him with that vague, uneasy yearning that one oftentimes experiences in a dream, when some beloved object has appeared to us suddenly and is as suddenly removed.

He looked after the cab—then hastily calling another, told the driver to follow the one with the white horse, at a convenient distance. He jumped into the cab, and leaning his head out, watched the progress of the vehicle in front of him with a feverish interest.

On, on, through the streets of the west-end, quieter now in September, and at last full stop before the imposing Monkhouse mansion, with its great melancholy black escutcheon over the doorway.

Philip leaped out of his cab, thrust a large fee into the cabman's hand, and then went on with a reckless boldness, and stood by the steps of the lordly house, while the people descended from their cab.

First Rokewood. A scowl contracted the dark eyebrows of the secretary at sight of young Ruthven, but a smile came to his mustached lip, he nodded at the young student, who removed his hat.

Then down stepped Norah—beautiful Norah—with a bright spot on her cheek, and a haughty flame in her dark blue eyes.

She started violently at sight of Ruthven.

Viola came close after her, but Philip could hardly withdraw his gaze from the face of Norah, so eloquent was it of indignation, contempt, appeal, entreaty, and command. It was the most speaking countenance, one for which a painter might have paid in untold gold, could he have fixed that expression and that beauty upon canvass, and then Norah spoke clearly and emphatically.

"Mr. Ruthven, we are prisoners; our jailor and tyrant stands before you. A large fortune passes into the hands of that man should Viola and myself die. We are utterly and completely in his power; all our friends, I believe, are on the Continent. I say to you as I said to the steward of Colonel Claverhouse; if you hear of the violent deaths of the Ladies Beaumont, search, make inquiries—do not suffer that man," and she pointed to him; "to run riot on our fortunes."

Philip turned white as ashes; he was a bold and strong young man, he rushed forward towards the twins, but in a moment Rokewood and a man servant interposed, held out their arms so as to form a fence between the sisters and Ruthven, while Granger and the other man servant, who had been following close upon the cab, completely cut off the escape of the girls.

"Now, sir," said Rokewood, raising his voice loudly, "attempt to interfere, or to create the slightest disturbance, and I give you at once in charge."

Ruthven felt how awkward this would be. Should Rokewood pursue such a course, Philip would be totally unable to assist the young ladies. He dropped his arms to his sides, and watched the sisters driven up the steps with a heart bursting with grief and rage. He saw them enter, and then the doors of the lordly mansion were closed in his face.

The whole had happened so quickly, the idea of their danger, and the secretary's villany was so new to him, that he felt like one in a dream, or like one who has received a stunning blow. He must help them, he must rescue them, but how? A young man living upon a small allowance, without friends or connections, and no money at his command to speak of. Norah had told him that their friends, their aristocratic acquaintances, were all on the Continent. He could only think of one course, to write to his friend Mr. Somers, the rector. But what could the rector do against a man powerful and wealthy as Mr. Rokewood, who was left guardian over the girls by the will of their late father, and who was aided and abetted by their stepmother, Lady Monkhouse.

While thought surged through the brain of the impassioned lover, he went and leaned against the railing of the enclosed garden. His face lowered darkly as he regarded the lordly Grosvenor Square mansion, with its great black escutcheon, its melancholy shattered windows, as impregnable a fortress to the unhappy young man as ever was moated castle in the old mediæval times to gallant knights, who watched outside of the castled prison which shut away his lady love from his sight.

"I will get them out if I burn the house down, the whole square down," muttered he, furiously.

Philip knew not whom to consult, but he felt it

was no use to stand there, staring in impotent wrath at the lordly, pitiless-looking West-end mansion.

He walked away then, looking on the ground and wondering within himself where he should find a clue which would lead him out of this maze of difficulty. All at once, while he was ruminating in this fashion, his arms folded, his eyes on the ground, he ran suddenly against a gentleman at the street corner, and, looking up to apologise, found himself facing Hammond Danvers.

The friends shook hands, there was a mutual chord of sympathy between them.

Philip relied upon and respected Danvers, and, holding him by the arm, he led him along, and poured into his ear the story of his *rencontre* with the daughters of the earl.

Hammond listened with dilating eyes, his dark face glowed, and grew pale again. He told Philip how that he had journeyed up from Belrose the day before for the purpose of attempting the rescue of the twins. They had escaped from the secretary at Paddington Terminus, and the last he had seen of them was when they were seated in a cab, being driven towards the residence of Colonel Claverhouse.

"Then Colonel Claverhouse must be abroad," cried Ruthven.

"Lady Norah told me all their friends were abroad. No doubt the servants accommodated them last night, and to-day Rokewood traced them out, and he carried them off by force. Now, the question is, Hammond, what is to be done?"

"We must have assistance," said Hammond, shortly, "legal proceedings ought to be taken, but all that consumes so much time; and it is so difficult to get people to act in these matters—there are the Messrs. Fairbold, the late earl's solicitors. Shall we go and consult them?"

Upon this course the young gentlemen agreed, they called a cab, and hurried down at once to the city to Lincoln's Inn, where they held conference with the Messrs. Fairbold—but it was as Hammond had surmised—these gentlemen did not like to put themselves forward, to bring themselves into antagonistic relations with the powerful secretary, the friend and guide of the enormously wealthy Countess of Monkhouse.

The poor girls were fairly disinherited by the late earl's will; their hundred thousand pounds, inherited from their mother, was virtually the secretary's until they came of age—there were fine pickings to be gathered by the lawyers out of such noble estates as those of Lady Monkhouse.

The Messrs. Fairbold were respectable and portly men, with heavy gold watch chains and shining bald heads. They said it was very sad, very unpleasant indeed, but what could they do? Probably the young ladies had a little exaggerated, etc., etc.

The two young men came down the stairs utterly disheartened and disgusted with the work in general, and the Messrs. Fairbold in particular.

"We must pay a lot of fellows, get into the house, and take them off by force," said Ruthven.

"We must be cautious," said Hammond, thoughtfully, bending his dark face towards the pavement.

"Send caution to the wind," cried Hammond.

"Without caution we shall ruin them, my dear fellow," cried Hammond. "Now the thing is, you are good at disguises. Can't you get into the house as a fortune-teller and flatter the ear of that sour-looking Granger, the lady's maid. Nay, even the countess might be open to an attack of that sort. She has always been an adventuress, and my eldest brother heard some strange stories about her in France. I should think she was the sort of woman to listen to a fortune-teller. You might pass for a German count, or could you not be a spirit medium with a new species of *Planchette*. You might prophesy for the countess's marriage with one of the crowned princes of Europe. I hate anything sly or deceitful—it goes against the grain—sadly with me, dear boy—but how on earth are we to rescue these sweet creatures unless we gain access to the house."

"Such a great, imposing looking place, too," said Philip, with a sad smile. "Such aristocracy in brick and mortar and stone. A house whose windows seem to look defiance at you like so many eyes."

Hammond laughed outright.

"But you must get in, nevertheless, Philip, and I will be waiting below in the street with a cab and three or four strong men, who will be able to help us fight if any of the people of the countess come out with the intent to rescue, which they might."

The young men, ardent and enthusiastic, desperately in love, and burning with indignation against the oppressors of the beautiful sisters, conferred long and deeply, laid their plans, and hastened to put them into execution.

Norah and Viola, confined to a suite of three rooms on the third story of the great house, waited upon by sneering Granger, served with meagre and unsavoury food, not suffered even to look out of their windows,

which were at the back of the mansion, the blinds being kept down, spent a most miserable time.

They were told that the countess was making preparations in regard to the manor house in the North, which was to be their future prison. Workmen were already busy there; the furniture was being burished up, the great gardens weeded, the windows mended. In a month from that time, that was to say in the month of October, the young ladies were to be installed in that melancholy manse amid the north mountains, under the care of a French governess, of the countess's choosing, and guarded by a set of mercenary wretches who were willing to fawn at the feet of those in power, and to commit any wickedness that was well paid for in money.

The days went drearily on; the sisters mourned and wept in one another's arms. The cruel Rokewood had acted with consummate diplomacy and diabolic cunning. He knew that imprisonment in a few rooms, with the blinds continually down, shut out from the air and the light of heaven, fed on tasteless food, denied over amusement in the shape of reading or musical instruments, must bring down, in less than a week, even a spirit as high as Nora's, despite the proud Norman blood which coursed through her young veins.

"We must have them tamed before we commence the journey, Margaret," he said to the countess, with his wicked sneer.

It was evening, and Lady Monkhouse and the secretary were lingering over a luxurious dessert, garnished with an almost priceless *Sèvres* service. The great centre dish was piled high with white and purple grapes; there were baskets of costly work-manship, filled with the rarest hot-house flowers, peaches, rich Orleans plums, hot-house pines, all the most delicious fruits in season and out of season, were there, to tempt the appetite of the gourmand and fastidious countess; these fruits and flowers came up every morning from Grand Court by train. The countess loved show and pomp, glitter, and display. She sat in a splendid dinner-dress of costliest black Genoa velvet; ornaments of jet were upon her white neck and arms, but the clasps and centre-pieces of these ornaments were all of diamonds of the purest water and largest size; her black hair was dressed high, and round the tall tower at the top of her head was a large *bandeau* of splendid diamonds and jet; her cheek was dyed with a crimson flush; her black eyes sparkled.

The twins, sitting disconsolate above on the third floor, with a miserable meal of weak tea and dried toast before them, would have been thankful for one small bunch of grapes out of all the abundance which decorated the table of their stepmother.

The Grosvenor Square dining-room was furnished in blue brocade satin, and all the chairs and the great masterpiece of a sideboard were of ebony, enamelled with gold and colours. It was a very splendid apartment.

"That man had good taste," said the countess, smiling upon her uncle, and looking up to the painted ceiling. "I always felt when I met him in Paris, and talked and flirted with him, that he had good taste, and that his town house and his country houses were well garnished, and I find it is even so."

"Enjoy yourself, Margaret, while you can," responded the secretary, with a grim smile, "you may not always be so fortunate."

The colour faded out of the lady's very lips, and she looked ghastly so, with only the carmine tinting which she put on for the completion of her toilette, staining her white cheeks.

"Speak out," she said, in an imperious tone, "tell me what new fatality threatens me now? I have hardly grown used to my new honours yet. Honours? I have received none; I have laid my hands on his jewels, his mansions, his gorgeous furniture, his gold and silver, his pictures and his daughters." Her voice took a hissing sound as she spoke of the twins. "But I have not yet held up my head among the noble of the land; this is not the season for balls and receptions. I have not exchanged complimentary impertinence nor scornful courtesies with a single hateful duchess or countess of them all. I have not been to Court, I have not kissed the hand of the Princess of Wales, nor had the honour of receiving his Royal Highness the Prince to breakfast; and you tell me to enjoy myself while I can!"

"Have patience, Margaret; for the love of heaven, calm yourself—the spite of the upper classes will betray you. I tell you we stand over a volcano. I saw the rascal lawyers Gordon and Bennett to-day; they are impertinent, nay, they are insolent. Listen, Margaret—did they but guess at the truth of the affair in the French inn—"

"But they do not," she said, shaking her jewelled hand at him. "Tell me what they demand?"

"Twenty-five thousand pounds, by the end of October," replied Rokewood, in a deep voice. "How

am I to raise that sum in six weeks? The earl's banking account is not large; all his property is in lands, mining shares and so on. He has put it all out to interest in government securities lately. True, you may sell out, and then you might have a hundred thousand pounds in the bank; but it would lessen your income—you would only have the rent rolls of Grand Court and the South estate, amounting altogether to not more than fifty thousand a-year. Now your income stands at one hundred thousand, there is only about twenty thousand pounds in the bank, and we want it all."

"I shall sell out," cried the lady; "sell out at once."

"I beg your pardon; although you are the heiress to all the property, the law will not suffer you to sell out for the space of a year."

"Then what are we to do?" asked the countess, fiercely.

"Well, we must get the girls' fifty thousand, which, by a clause in the mother's will, the father could claim at once, and you, as his representative, can do the same. The rascal lawyers say that the forgeries would send them to the mines to work in chains if they were discovered, and they are determined to denounce us and turn king's evidence unless they have twenty thousand pounds—enough to retire upon. Then Camp, the parson—"

"Hush!" cried Lady Monkhouse; "please not to torture me. King's evidence, did you say? Those girls, they ought not to live another week."

She rose to her feet and paced the room, like a caged tigress.

"I could not endure the downfall—to fall before I have reached the summit. Oh, idiot!" and in her anger, the furious woman turned upon the secretary and spat in his face, at the same time stamping passionately on the floor. "Idiot! not to have got his confession stamped and sealed, and his receipt for twenty thousand pounds. Take it out of the bank, stupid, and pay him—pay him!"

She literally foamed at the mouth—she was like Hecate coming up out of the infernal regions.

"My good woman, you are simply mad," said Rokewood, quietly wiping his face with his scented handkerchief, and putting a large space between his niece and himself. "If I pay all that to Gordon, what will become of Camp? No, no, be reasonable; I only wish to show you that we must act, and that speedily."

"To-night if you like," said the countess, with a dreadful leer in her flashing eyes.

She looked so diabolic as she spoke, that even the miscreant secretary shaded his eyes with his hands.

"For the love of mercy, don't run mad, good niece, he said, with a sullen laugh. "If the girls died here, and suddenly, you and I—"

And Rokewood pointed to his throat, twisting his embroidered and scented handkerchief into the form of a halter.

"I only wish you to use despatch, and—"

At that moment there came a loud knocking at the street door—a loud knocking as of one who has authority and will be heard. There was something in the sound which made the countess turn white a second time.

"Listen," she said, "who is that?"

Rokewood started to his feet, and a livid hue spread over his features.

Then they heard the door fall back, and the measured sound of many feet ascending the staircase.

There was no way of escaping from the room, it opened right upon a great landing fronting the staircase.

"It is your fault, you were not quick enough," hissed out the countess.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE

WE understand that Mr. T. P. Jones, of Dudley, has just completed for the New Brighton landing-stage a mooring chain which stood a strain of upwards of ninety-nine tons.

In the operations for sinking the shaft of the Tower Subway on Tower Hill, from 200 to 300 coins, dating from the reign of Henry III., were discovered about 14 ft. from the surface.

THE Court of Chancery has granted an order in the debenture trustees of the Atlantic and Great Western Railway to distribute among the holders the sum of 35,000*l.* Arrangements, it is stated, are also nearly completed whereby, from the sale of certain securities by the trustees, a farther amount will be divided.

TEMPERATURE OF THE EARTH'S CRUST.—As we descend in a mine the increase of temperature appears to be independent of the altitude of the place, or of the density of the air, as proved by the obser-

vations of Humboldt. Thus, in a silver-mine in the Andes of Peru, at an elevation of 11,875 English feet above the sea, the temperature was found to be 25.4 deg. Fahr. higher than the external air. In another mine, at the same elevation, the difference between the temperature of the internal and external air was found to be 15.8 deg. Fahr., and the water streaming down the rock showed 52.3 Fahr. These observations were repeated in other localities with similar results. The concurrent testimony, therefore, of all the observations which have been made is in favour of an increase of temperature, though at rates varying considerably from one another, and this has been established as holding good down to a depth of about 2,400 feet from the surface. What seems to us now to be required in a series of experiments made at even greater depths.

BOILER JELLY.—Our attention has been called to a curious compound called "boiler jelly," invented by Mr. William Ross, of Walworth, for the purpose of preventing the formation of mineral crusts on boiler plates by the use of impure water. This substance is certainly very active. It will prevent the formation of an adherent deposit in all fresh-water boilers, and even in the case of sea water it will retard incrustation for a certain period, after which the boiler is blown off. Though it contains no gelatine, it appears to be a peculiar gelatinous substance, which owes its action to the property it possesses of rendering the liquid in the boiler slightly mucilaginous, so that as the calcareous particles separate from the water they are enveloped in a microscopic layer of mullage, which prevents them adhering together or to the sides of the boiler.

POWER OF THE TIDES.—To estimate the force of the tides all that is necessary is the consideration that the attraction of the sun and moon (principally the latter), acting in opposition to terrestrial gravitation, elevates the surface of a large portion of the ocean, nearly twice in twenty-four hours, to the mean height of about two feet. The extent of surface thus raised may be set down at 100,000,000 square miles, or one half of the surface of the earth, taking this at 200,000,000 of square miles, of which the ocean occupies about three-fourths, or 150,000,000. Every square mile of water, two feet thick, contains nearly 60,000,000 cubic feet, or 3,500,000,000 pounds of water, and this, multiplied by 1,000,000,000, gives the enormous number of 763,000,000,000,000 foot pounds exerted every twelve and a-half hours, or 750 minutes, which gives, per minute, a power of 100,000,000,000,000,000 foot pounds. Dividing this by 33,000, to reduce it to horse-power, we obtain nearly 3,000,000,000,000 horse-power as the total power of the tide-wave over the whole surface of the earth.

TRIAL OF THE MONARCH.—The Monarch, armoured iron-built turret ship, 7 guns, Capt. John E. Commerell, V.C., C.B., was recently tested on her six hours' continuous steaming trial outside the Isle of Wight, the results of which may be taken as corroborating fully the high rate of speed she attained on her measured mile trial, of very close upon 15 knots per hour. These six hours' trial under steam of Her Majesty's ships outside the Isle of Wight have been, up to the present time—and are now, if we may judge from the rule followed with the Monarch—conducted upon a mere "rule-of-thumb" system, more puzzling to its promoters than it is to outsiders. When the six hours' continuous steaming trials of Her Majesty's ships outside the Isle of Wight were first entered upon, the ships were raced during the six hours at their greatest speed of engines between fixed and distance-known headland points, and thus a definite measure of the ship's speed, as well as the continuous capability of her engines, was obtained. Now the test is confined simply to the efficiency of the engines through a six hours' continuous steaming, and the question of exact distance travelled over by the ship during the six hours is entirely shelved. We would submit for the consideration of Mr. Childers, Rear-Admiral Robinson, and Mr. Reed, the Chief Constructor of the Navy, an opinion that the actual space steamed over by a ship during her six hours' trial off the Isle of Wight is quite as important as the efficient working of her machinery. If the Admiralty cannot find one fixed course for the six hours' trial of her Majesty's ships, why cannot their lordships take up the yacht racing course, with which they must all be familiar, and send our iron-clads on such trips from the Nab Light to the break-water of Cherbourg and back again? In the run the Monarch's engines realised a mean speed throughout the six hours of 62.66 revolutions per minute, and 3797 per hour. The entire number of revolutions made by the engines during the six hours was 22,561. The mean steam pressure in the cylinders was 19.32 lb., and the indicated power of the engines 7,468.40 horse.



[A GUILTY CONSCIENCE]

THE HAMPTON MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XI.

Cold as the marble where his length was laid
Pale as the beam that o'er his features played,
Was Lara laid. *Byron.*

The customary morning came,
And breathed new vigour in his shaken frame.

Aught he beholds or hears, his thought appeals
As evening saddens on the dark gray walls. *Ibid.*

SIR ROSLYN CHETWODE quickly recovered his serenity, and stirred the fire together, putting on some fresh logs, and making the winter evening, so cheerless without, snug and comfortable within.

"Draw your chair nearer to the fire, my boy," he said, "and you, too, Mae. The boy and I will have some whisky toddy and a cigar. It is pleasant to talk for an hour before going to bed; or, would you prefer, Leonard, that Mae should sing and play to us? I know her accommodating disposition so well, that I am persuaded she will not refuse any request we make."

"Not to-night, guardy dear," said Mae, with a look of aversion at the piano. "It is so cold. Do please pity my poor fingers."

"The fact is, puss, you would rather talk to Leonard and hear him converse. I appreciate your selfishness, and thoroughly understand your waywardness. However, you shall be forgiven this time, though if you dare to have an opinion of your own again, I shall think that you mean to be self-willed after marriage."

"I must get married first," answered Mae, with a demure simper. "No one will have me, guardy. I am afraid I shall live and die an old maid."

"Here's heresy, Leonard, my boy!" cried the baronet. "Do you hear this and remain silent. I am astonished. It would not have been so in my young days."

"Mae does not mean what she says," answered Leonard, with a smile. "We begin to understand one another a little better than we did at first, and you may take my word for it, that Mae will not die an old maid, and more than that, if you are speculative you may wager that she is somebody's wife before the year's out, and we are now in March."

Mae blushed crimson, and turned away her head to hide her face. Sir Roslyn laughed, but he did so in a hollow manner, and the conversation flagged. Making the toddy took up some little time, and the

whisky once more loosened the tongues of the men, who told strange stories, to which Mae listened wonderingly, and it was nearly twelve before they separated for the night.

As may be easily imagined, the days which immediately succeeded the horrible murder in the wood, were passed by Leonard in a state of feverish anxiety.

Every footstep made him start, and he was in the position of the villain so ably described by Shakespeare, who feared each bush an officer. He expected to hear that the body had been found, and identified as that of Count Davignon; that a jury was empanelled, and they and the coroner were trying to discover the cause of death, and he anticipated seeing full accounts in the journals of the awful and mysterious affair, which had engaged the attention of the police, who had already obtained a clue to the perpetrator of the crime, and were upon his track.

To his amazement, however, this was not the case. Day after day passed, and not a word was spoken about the finding of a dead body.

Sir Roslyn Chetwode wondered at the non-appearance of the count, but Leonard's explanation was to some extent re-assuring.

He had described Count Davignon as a man of eccentric nature and wandering habits, a man who would, when the fit was on him, take it into his head to absent himself from his friends, without a word to anybody, and remain away for weeks or months, without any communication however slender or abrupt.

That the count had indulged his peculiar but harmless eccentricity, Sir Roslyn did not doubt, and he ceased to wonder when a fortnight elapsed and no tidings came of his welfare or whereabouts.

Leonard grew bolder, and flattered himself that the position of the glade in the wood, where the crime was committed, was so isolated and lonely, that no one was likely to wander in that direction, or come across the ghastly relics of mortality, and he looked anxiously forward to the time when nothing but a rotting skeleton would remain to tell the hideous tale of murderous violence.

One fine bright morning, Sir Roslyn Chetwode announced his intention of enjoying some rabbit shooting, and insisted that Leonard should accompany him, though the latter would have declined, if he could have done so with a good grace.

"You want some amusement, boy," said the bluff old man, hale and hearty as usual, "you don't go out enough. It will never do for you to take a book, reading and moping your time away in the house. How do you think our ancestors made this the great

country it is? By their attention to manly sports and healthy exercises, together with a plentiful indulgence in beef and ale. So shoulder your gun, and let me see what sort of a shot you are. The Chetwodes could always take a good aim!"

Thus constrained, Leonard joined the party, which consisted of the father himself, the head-keeper, and two underlings, one of whom carried a bag of ferrets, the other being burdened with powder and shot, as well as a can of good ale, without which the baronet did not care to stir far from home.

To Leonard's annoyance, the keeper went in a direct line to the warren, which was so near the fatal spot. As they neared it, Leonard's agitation increased to positive terror, and his hands trembled so much, that he felt he should miss everything he fired at, even if he had strength enough to shoulder his gun, and pull the trigger. Once he suggested that they should select another spot, saying:

"Is this the best place you can find for rabbits? If I remember rightly, there were some warrens at the old sand pits, on the other side of the wood, which abounded with them."

"So there were," rejoined the baronet; "but there was a deal of damage done by them to the crops, and I gave my tenant leave to shoot them for twelve months. Well sir, he made such good use of his time, banging away day and night almost, that he exterminated them, and reaped a handsome harvest, I am told, by supplying the London markets. I have turned a few of a superior breed up there, and as I have rescinded my permission, I suppose we shall have some shooting again before long. However, this warren swarms with rabbits, and I can promise you some good sport. Turn the ferrets in, Thomas, to announce our arrival to the inhabitants," added the old gentleman, jocularly.

Seeing that there was no help for it, Leonard sat down on a mound with his gun cocked, ready for a shot. He determined that no power on earth should make him betray his guilt by word or action, so he tortured himself to be calm, and to control his agitation, should either the dogs or keepers discover the dead body of a human being, slain by his hand, which he believed to be hidden from their view only by a few ridges of sand, and a belt of trees and brushwood.

The rabbits soon began to move, and Leonard, finding he was expected to do so, fired; four times out of six he missed, which astonished his father, who was not chary of his condemnation. Several times a wounded rabbit ran towards the open glade, which was the scene of the murder, pursued by the dogs, and Leonard drew his breath quickly, fully an-

anticipating that a sharp yelping would announce the discovery of the remains, but no such thing happened. A glass or two of strong ale strengthened his nerves, which were farther soothed by a pipe, and towards twelve o'clock, he improved in his shooting, killing well and neatly.

"I thought you could not have lost the knack," exclaimed Sir Roslyn, much pleased. "You want practice, that is all."

They returned home with a heavy bag, and were met by Mae, who had no taste for field sports, which necessitated the destruction of living creatures. With the sentimental feeling of a tender-hearted girl, she esteemed them cruel, and shuddered to hear the childlike cry of a hunted hare, or the dying squeal of a wounded rabbit.

"Give your gun to the keeper, and take me for a walk, Leonard," she said. "It is one of the very few fine days we have had this year, and it would be criminal to neglect it."

He complied with her request in a moment, flushing with pleasure, because she had proposed it. He handed his gun to the keeper, and saying he should be back to lunch, walked off with pretty Mae Aldis hanging on his arm.

It was too early in the year to gather flowers, nor was there any attraction in the wood, which at present was bleak and bare; but their footsteps, instinctively, as it were, wandered in that direction, while they were engaged in sweet converse.

There were many intricate paths in the wood, through which they made their way, scarcely knowing in what part they were; giving themselves up to the intoxication of the mutual passion which possessed them, oblivious of all else.

Leonard said, as he strolled along, with one arm round Mae's waist, and with the other pushing aside the branches and brambles, which were in her way. "I love you fondly, Mae, dearest, and the time has come for me to tell you so plainly; and I can never enjoy any happiness unless you consent to be my wife."

"You must have guessed, Leonard," she replied, in a low, tremulous voice, "what my answer would be. If you can read the language of the eyes, you must have seen there a never-dying love for you. My heart was yours before I saw you, and when I discovered that you more than realised the extravagant ideal I had formed of you, it became doubly yours."

"Dear Mae," he said, tenderly. "I did not question the fact of your entertaining a passion for me; but I wished to hear the delicious certainty from your own lips. You will be my wife, and that shortly. I see nothing to hinder us from enjoying as perfect happiness as is permitted to mortals on this earth, and—"

And suddenly he started and broke off abruptly, pressing her by the arm. She regarded him with astonishment, and was shocked to see his face convulsed with a nameless dread.

"Not there, not there," he said. "Back Mae, I did not know whether we were wandering. Back, I say."

But Mae was not to be so easily turned away when her curiosity was excited. Why should Leonard be so agitated? What had he seen? Perplexed but not alarmed by his unaccountable behaviour, she resolutely refused to be led back.

"What is it, dearest?" she asked. "Has your imagination conjured up some horrid spectre, or is there some concealed pit-fall from which you apprehend danger?"

"I was dreaming, dear, I think," he answered, confusedly. "I am very strange at times, and methought a huge snake, such as I have seen in the East, lay concealed amongst the bushes."

"You must not give way to such horrid fancies!" exclaimed Mae, brightening up; and to show you that there is no foundation for your silly alarm, I will go and explore."

Before he could restrain her, she had broken away from his nervous grasp, and dashed through the bushes which fringed the edges of a glade, covered with green grass and shut in on all sides by dark and ominous pine trees.

Leonard sank on his knees, and hid his face in his hands as if to avert some catastrophe, or shut out a dreadful sight from his shrinking eyes.

Mae was not long gone, a couple of minutes, perhaps, but the time seemed terribly tedious and lingering to him, who awaited her return in fear and trembling.

She was actually on the fatal spot where Count Davignon fell, to which his incautious footsteps had led him, and he thought that the retributive justice of heaven was about to make his betrothed wife a witness against him. The long grass might have grown up around the body, but he argued that she could not fail to find it. The usual consequence of a crime is the fearful apprehension to which the

criminal is always subject; and the wretched man suffered almost intolerable agony during Mae's absence.

He fully expected that she would come to him with quivering lips, dilated eyes, pallid cheeks and horror-stricken looks, conjuring him to come and look at what she had discovered.

All at once, a light footfall was heard close by him, accompanied by a rustling of the bushes and a peal of merry laughter fell upon his ears.

Was he dreaming? He could not understand it. Looking up shyly, he interrogated Mae's face, and listened rapturously to her musical laugh, which was repeated again. Never was rain, in a season of long continued drought, more refreshing to the parched earth than this laughter to his languid soul.

"Get up, you silly fellow," she said, in her childish way. "There is no snake. I have looked everywhere, and not seen so much as a weasel. The idea of a snake at this time of the year is preposterous."

"You have seen nothing!" repeated Leonard, rising and elaborating each word; "and you have looked everywhere?"

"Certainly; my eyes are quick enough. If you have still got the fancy in your head, come and look for yourself. There is nothing whatever in that open glade either animate or inanimate."

He suffered her to take him by the hand and lead him through the thicket into the grass-covered space. He wandered round and round in circles, which he made narrower each time, searching about with an eagerness which made Mae question his sanity.

At last, as he came to the centre, he paused and was obliged to admit that Mae was right. There was nothing animate or inanimate in that open space and yet three weeks had not elapsed since he left the corpse of a murdered man there.

Raising his eyes he looked around him, to see if he was really in the right place.

Yes, he was not mistaken, and he went home with a light heart, hoping and almost knowing that he had not killed a fellow creature.

It was not for some time, however, that he knew the truth of the matter.

He received a letter some months afterwards from France, signed by the Count Davignon, who told him that he had been but slightly wounded in the neck, but he was so alarmed at the determination shown by Leonard that he resolved not to trouble him any more, and that he had returned to his own country. If he would send him a certain sum of money, he would swear never to write to him again, nor to worry him any farther with threats of exposing his antecedents.

Leonard at once sent the money, and congratulated himself upon getting rid of the count at a cheap rate. But our readers will ask, what hold the count had over Leonard. This is our answer: he knew him to be an impostor.

CHAPTER XII.

Provide what money, and what arms you can,
Who has the gold, shall never want the man.

Baron.

Yes, Leonard Chetwode was not what he had represented himself to be. Yet he had fairly established himself in the place he had usurped. The visit of friends, his affected recognition of them, their total unsuspiciousness of the fact that he was an impostor, their friendliness, all conspired to ease his mind of any uneasiness in regard to his position. He felt himself secure. He had nothing to fear from those who had never seen the real Leonard. It was necessary for him to be on his guard with the baronet; but Sir Roslyn had not seen his son for seven years, since his boyhood, in fact, and it would not be easy for him to detect a stranger in this pretended son. From others, no danger was to be apprehended.

"The lines are in my hands," thought the impostor, one afternoon and before dinner, as he jubilantly turned his head, so that the sparkle of his eyes might not be observed. "I can drive straight to a splendid success if I only keep a steady hand. I can dissemble as well as any actor on a public stage. I have simply to be careful and feel my way. I will strengthen my position, at the earliest possible moment, by a marriage with this young heiress. When she becomes my wife, and her fortune falls into my hand, as I intend it shall, I can defy detection."

He luxuriated in the thought.

"Mae Aldis must be my bulwark of defence," he mused, his gaze falling on the child-like maiden, with her sunny wealth of floating hair, and her soft, thoughtful eyes, as she sat, seemingly unconscious of presence. "If she marries me, and clings to me, I shall not be ruined, if some cursed chance strips my present pretences from me. Still, it would go hard with me to give up the prospect of becoming Sir Leonard Chetwode, and the master of Chetwode Hall. I want all the prizes, and I will have them, too."

He ran his fingers through his long hair, and his sinister features assumed a daring and determined expression.

Sir Roslyn, who had gone to the library, returned at this juncture. Mae roused herself from her abstraction, and the impostor threw aside his scheming thoughtfulness. An agreeable family conversation ensued, which lasted until Mae withdrew to perfect her attire for dinner. The baronet made some excuse and retired to his own chamber.

Thus left to himself, Leonard determined to take a solitary walk about the park. Taking his hat and a great coat from the rack in the corridor, upon which he had left them an hour before, he quitted the house alone.

The long afternoon was drawing to a close, the west presented to view great banks of dull clouds. The wind was still high, ruffling the waters of the Severn into fury madness, and the damp, heavy atmosphere was settling like a pall upon the scene.

Leonard turned his back upon the river, walking in the opposite direction towards the park and plantations, looking about him with an air of recognition as he proceeded.

When he had left the hall behind him at a little distance, this air of recognition changed to one of eager curiosity.

Advancing rapidly towards the park, he commented upon the game with which it was stocked, muttering his satisfaction.

"Fine old trees!" he muttered. "Splendid deer. Plenty of smaller game. Pheasants and other birds in variety. Well, I am in luck! This must have been made on purpose for me, for I appreciate it thoroughly. What more could his heart have desired? Pampered and petted as he had always been, he couldn't have appreciated these luxuries half so well as I?"

He walked slowly along the gloomy paths, lighting a cigar as he went. The shadows were too thick under the trees of the park to permit him to continue long his observations, and he began to retrace his steps to the Hall by a path that led close to the high stone wall dividing the lawn from the road.

It was still light here, although the darkness seemed to be settling like a fog upon the fretting river, a few rods in advance. Puffing his cigar with evident enjoyment, Leonard walked still more leisurely, his hands behind him, his eyes fixed unseeingly upon the distant gloom.

"I think I'll go in and have a chat with the lodge-keeper," he exclaimed, suddenly, as a cheerful ray of light streamed out from the diamond-paned casement of the gate-lodge. "He made a lowly obeisance to me when I came in to-day. An old servant whom I remember well," and he laughed softly.

He hastened towards the lodge.

He had taken not more than a dozen steps when a scrambling noise upon the outside of the stone wall arrested his steps. He paused instinctively, waiting for farther demonstrations. Evidently a man was attempting to climb the wall. The next moment the attempt succeeded, a man's head appearing above the level of the parapet, and moving restlessly about with a peering movement.

Leonard stepped hastily behind a tree.

Seemingly convinced that no observer was near, the man hastily climbed over, leaping to the ground. He stood in the shadow of the wall, rubbing his knees, and breathing upon his hands, as if those parts of his person had suffered excoriation by his singular exercise. In the midst of his self-ministrations the pretended Leonard Chetwode sprang from his concealment, and caught the intruder by the shoulder, exclaiming:

"A poacher!"

The man started, then broke into a laugh. "No more a yourself, cap'en," he answered. "I am Jakes, just from London. I wanted to see you private-like, scumbled this stone wall."

"Ah, Jakes!" said Leonard, in an altered tone, "come away from here. The lodge-keeper may have seen you. The gardeners may be about. Come into the park!"

He flung away his cigar, and taking the newcomer by the arm, he hurried him into the depths of the park, neither speaking a word. He did not pause until they stood in a lovely, secluded dell, in a remote corner, which promised them the strictest privacy.

Then he took a small case from his pocket, extracted a wax match, lighted it hurriedly, and glanced first at the scene upon which they had entered, secondly, upon the face of his companion.

It was not a strange, nor was it a prepossessing countenance. A hundred like it may be seen every day in the purlieus of London. It was coarse, red, and ill-favored. The bushy hair grew low on the forehead, and the small eyes looked out from unfriended lids. The mouth was almost repulsive in its expression.

The man's attire showed attention to dress, as well as a perverted taste. A flashy necktie fastened his clean collar. His coat was of velvet, new, and shining with metal buttons. A yellow watch-chain strayed over the front of his gorgeous waistcoat, and rings adorned his fingers.

"Well, Jakes," said the impostor, impatiently, "you can speak here in perfect security. No one can hear us. Why are you here? Has anything happened?"

"Nothin' partic'lar," was the response.

"The—prisoner is all right?"

"As right as a trivet, sir."

"Mind hasn't cleared up yet, of course?"

"Not a bit of it, sir. He's dreadful quiet now; kind o' giv' up the idea of escape, I think. We watch him careful all the same, as you ordered."

"Very good, Jakes. The band is all right?"

The man replied in the affirmative, adding: "I came up here, cap'n, to act as your valet, in case you wanted me. The fellows all think you're gone off to Wales, or somewhere, and no one but me even guesses where you are and what you are doing. How are you getting on, sir?"

"Splendidly," answered the false Leonard. "Sir Roslyn has not a suspicion that I am not his son. The girl likes me already, blushes when I speak to her, and will jump for joy when I ask her to be my wife. The most intimate friends of the family have called, and I acted my part so well that they haven't a doubt but I am the person I pretend to be."

"But the barrowright?" said Jakes, reflectively. "Don't he suspicion nothing? He's young yet, you say, and keen and sharp as razors. He may find your pattern short o' the real man's."

"No danger, Jakes. His son was but a lad when he went away. I flatter myself I don't look unlike the Chetwodes. I'm dark, you know, and so are they. I know how to play my cards, Jakes. I sha'n't be detected."

"I'm sure I hope not, sir. It is a bold speculation, but a title and a great place, and a rich young wife is worth taking trouble for. And you're stepped right in, an' nobody dreamed o' your not being the real son?" said Jakes, admiringly. "I'd like to stay along of you, cap'n, as your confidential man, your valet, you know. I can go back and forth from the band on your errands, and be a real help to you."

The impostor reflected.

As the man's words had betrayed, the pretended Leonard Chetwode was the leader of a daring band of law-breakers, whose head-quarters was in London.

This band had a wide basis for operations. They included among their number expert counterfeiters and coiners, forgers, gamblers, and swindlers of every description.

They worked together, or separately, as individuals preferred, but each was bound to succour a brother member in distress, to aid his escape from the hands of the law, should he fall into them, and to shelter and conceal him when he should become a fugitive.

The leader of the band, the pretended Leonard Chetwode, although so young, was their director and their head in all their wicked and daring schemes. An adventurer from his boyhood, he had ripened early in evil ways. His father had been a gentlemanly sort of swindler, and from him the young man had inherited his handsome face, refined manners, and lofty aspirations. A base schemer, a bold and wicked spirit, he had gained the idea of obtaining a high position, and cutting loose from the company of which he was the head.

This, then, was the man who had been so unhesitatingly received at Chetwode Hall as the son and heir of Sir Roslyn Chetwode; this, then, was the man who had usurped the place of Mac's betrothed, and who aspired to become her husband; this, then, was the man who boasted already of having interested her artless affections!

"You are sure the prisoner will be safe, if you remain, Jakes?" he asked.

"Sure's death, sir. The old woman can manage him easily enough, weak as he is."

"Then you may stay. I can account for your coming easily enough. You are a faithful fellow, who accompanied me from Italy to England as valet, and who has followed me up from London, after having been to visit your friends."

"Very good, sir," replied Jakes, delighted at the permission to remain. "Shall I go up to the house, along of you?"

"No, you had better follow me a few minutes later. I will mention that I expect my valet. You know how to comport yourself here. Mind, no gossiping with the servants. You've been a good servant to me, Jakes, and, if I win the game I'm playing, you shall always have a home here, nothing to do, and good wages."

This promise was especially pleasing to Jakes. He was a man ready enough to do wrong, but without brains to plan evil deeds cleverly.

Under the direction of his master, of whose capabilities in that line he had the highest opinion, he was a lawless, courageous, active evil-doer.

"It's a bargain, cap'n," he exclaimed. "And anything you may want done, that I can do, you may depend upon me for."

"Your services may be very useful to me, Jakes," answered his master. "Remember I am Mr. Chetwode here. Be cautious, and gain all the information concerning the family that you are able to from the servants, without betraying yourself."

The man gave an eager assent. He found the world pleasanter, and life easier, when relieved of the responsibility of getting his own living, and he was charmed with the prospect of an infinity of good dinner-beer, and pocket-money.

On his part, the pretended Leonard was pleased at having his ally at hand, in case of need. He knew that Jakes would be faithful as long as well-fed, and he thought it wise to be prepared for any emergency, where he might require friendship and aid. So both were well suited.

"We may as well walk towards the house," said the impostor. "We will part at the edge of the lawn."

They quitted the little dell together, walking side by side along the park-paths, conversing of the "prisoner," to whom they had before alluded.

"You took his story exactly, Cap—Mr. Chetwode?" asked Jakes.

"Word for word—even to the names of his rescuers," was the reply. "It's well to be honest as far as one can, Jakes. The story is incredible enough at best, but it passed for truth, because it was truth—only the hero of the adventure wasn't me," and he laughed in his soft, peculiar, disagreeable way.

The two men soon gained the extremity of the park. They paused a moment, while Leonard gave his final injunctions and instructions, and then the latter sauntered towards the Hall, while Jakes clambered over the wall again, preparatory to making his entrance through the lodge-gates in due form.

The schemer's heart was brimming over with jubilation as he hurried forward. Everything was going well with him. He had a friend at hand, should he require one. His news from town was what he desired; and his prospects were absolutely brilliant.

He ascended the steps of the porch airily, entered the Hall, and laid aside his hat and great-coat, then making his way into the dining-room.

Sir Roslyn and Mae were there, the latter more than ever lovely, with flowers in her hair, and ribbons about her waist.

"I have been out to enjoy a cigar and the evening shadows," said the impostor, lightly. "There is nothing I love so well as a night ramble. My valet has not arrived, I suppose, father?"

"No, I was not aware that you had a valet, Leonard," replied the baronet.

"Yes, I have an excellent one, an eccentric coarse-looking fellow, but with a good heart. He came on with me from Italy, where his late master discharged him, but I gave him a holiday for a month or so."

With this the subject was carelessly dismissed. It came up soon after, however, when a footman came to say that Mr. Chetwode's valet had arrived.

"Send him up to my rooms," said the impostor. "Or, stay; take him down to the servants' hall, and give him something to eat, poor fellow!"

Mae thought with pleasure of the consideration Leonard evinced for his servant.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the events that followed. The dinner and evening were passed pleasantly. At a late hour the family separated, going their separate ways.

On entering his chamber, Leonard found his servant in possession.

"My stay here, Jakes," he ejaculated, locking the door behind him, "has been full of events. I've made a splendid impression on everybody, and if Sir Roslyn were to die, I could enter into possession of everything without dispute."

Jakes congratulated him on his success.

"It is nothing to what will happen," was the complacent response. "I mean to be married in a month to an adoring bride, and I mean to have no marriage settlements either. I don't believe in tying up property away from the husband!"

The two now laughed together. Then they sat before the fire, and talked long and earnestly. The hours flew on. Everyone within the Hall, except its proprietor, had retired to bed. And still, unmindful of the lapse of time, they continued their conversation. At last they became tired. The pretended

Leonard went to bed in his handsome chamber, and Jakes retired to a small ante-chamber, adjoining, that had been assigned him. They were both soon asleep, slumbering as peacefully, if less softly, than Mac in her distant rooms.

One pair of eyes within the mansion alone remained sleepless. They belonged to Sir Roslyn, who sat in his study, his head bowed, his face haggard, his heart a stern battle-field between the one great love of his life and his sense of duty and paternal devotion.

CHAPTER XIII.

All's to be feared where all is to be lost!

Byron.

It was still early evening when the Lady Beatrice, in her humble disguise, slowly approached Hampton House. The street was dark, save for the fitful glimmer of the gas lamps, and few people were abroad.

The Lady Beatrice, with the caution which had become second nature to her, kept up the character she had assumed of an infirm old countrywoman, and, while she walked seemingly with an effort, she swept, from out of the depths of her poke bonnet, swift and keen glances.

The drawing-rooms of Hampton House were lighted, and the curtains partially drawn. No face appeared at the windows. The area door was deserted. No wayfarer appeared on that side of the street. But, over the way, a man was carelessly lounging against a lamp-post, apparently awaiting the coming of a friend. This man was Rush, the detective.

The Lady Beatrice prolonged the glances she had bestowed upon him. On the alert, full of apprehension and suspicion, she regarded him narrowly, but saw nothing in his quiet attitude to arouse her alarm.

"I am too suspicious," she thought, as she laboriously descended the area steps. "But how easy and simple a matter it would be for some of my enemies to set a detective on my track. Pshaw! I have thought the same thing all these years, and my fears have been groundless. Yet I cannot be too careful."

She knocked at the area door and at the same moment it was opened by her tiring woman, who had been on the watch for her coming.

"Come in, dear aunt," said Mrs. Fleck, loudly, giving her arm to her pretended relative. "The servants are mostly out. Come right up to my room, poor, dear soul, and get warm."

The two proceeded to the apartment of Mrs. Fleck, meeting no one on the way. The tiring woman secured her doors, and then flung open the way of entrance into her mistress's chambers. The brilliant lights and fire made the sumptuous rooms seem a fairy realm.

The Lady Beatrice passed into her dressing-room, and flung off her dingy outer garments and hideous bonnet.

"I left them all well at the Laurels, Mary," she said sighing. "Meggy sent you her love. You must go down on Sunday for a holiday. Is there any news for me? Has anything happened during my absence? Is my father well?"

"Yes, my lady," declared the woman, with an uneasy glance at the door, upon which a new lock had been placed that day. "My lord is well, and something has happened!"

The woman's tone startled her mistress. The Lady Beatrice turned and regarded her with a wondering frightened look.

"What is it?" she demanded. "Speak, Mary!"

"Last night," replied the woman, "a coal snapped out from this grate upon the rug. It burned there, filling the room with smoke. The servants raised the cry of fire. Lord Hampton and Lord Adlowe dismissed the servants and rushed up stairs. They broke the door in—"

"Well?" said the Lady Beatrice, her eyes burning like two fiery stars in the midst of her white face. "They discovered my absence?"

"Yes, my lady; my lord made some excuse to Lord Adlowe, so that he could suspect nothing amiss, but this morning his lordship, your father, sent for me to the library, and offered me a hundred pounds if I would betray your secret—for he said he knew you had one. I pretended total ignorance, my lady, and he dismissed me at last in high displeasure. He knows you did not sleep here last night, for he came up this morning and replaced with his own hands the lock that was broken last evening. The servants suspect nothing wrong, but my lord does, and so does Lord Adlowe."

"Miserable fatality!" said the Lady Beatrice, in

agitation. "My father's pride will induce him to conceal his discovery. But Lord Adlowe is unsafe, treacherous, and my enemy, notwithstanding his pretensions of love for me. That he, of all men, should have obtained this clue to my secret! I feel as if I were in danger—I and those dearer to me than my own soul!"

She wrung her slender white hands in the intensity of her emotion.

"I felt last night, after the alarm of fire, as if there was trouble before us," said the woman gloomily. "I was in my own room at the time. After my lord had secured the door and had gone down stairs, I came in here, and sat by the fire a long time, and then I arose and put away your dresses and jewels, and laid out your toilette for to-night. At last, hours after Lord Adlowe went away, I went to the windows of your ladyship's boudoir, and looked down into the street. I was that nervous, my lady, that when I saw a man lounging, opposite waiting for somebody, I fancied him a spy on your ladyship. You know that you have always dreaded spies, my lady, and have often said it was likely someone might take a fancy to watch you. I looked at the man a long time, but he finally went away without meeting anyone."

"Describe the man, Mary."

"He looked like a swell, my lady, who had been to some party in the neighbourhood."

"It is the same!" ejaculated her ladyship. "He is over the way now. Lord Adlowe has set him on my track. Lord Adlowe has hired him to watch for my return. Look out of the window, Mary, and see if he is still there."

The woman hastened into the adjoining room, and speedily returned with the announcement that he was pacing slowly up and down the pavement.

"He saw me come in, but I am sure he took me to be nothing more than I appeared," said the Lady Beatrice. "He will watch for the old woman's reappearance. Should he see her no more, he might suspect my disguise. Now, Mary, you must help me to outwit this detective or spy. Dress yourself quickly in these old garments. Put them on over your own."

She hastily removed her humble attire, stripping off the scanty dress in feverish haste. The tiring-woman, without a word of questioning, put on the entire suit over her own dress, the large cloak concealing her amplitude of figure.

"Pull the bonnet over your face, Mary, and lower your veil," said the Lady Beatrice. "You must carry yourself and walk just as I did, but that will be easy enough since you taught me how to act the part yourself. Go out at the area door. Return in half-an-hour in your own proper costume as Mary Fleck. You had better take your hood and cloak under your arm. No one will suspect our ruse, and we shall have outwitted this detective."

She gave a touch or two to the woman's dress, and pronounced her an able representative of herself in her late disguise. Then having donned her white cashmere habit, she let her faithful attendant out into the hall, and hastened to the front windows to watch her departure.

The detective was still pacing leisurely to and fro. Now and then he looked around him with an attentive air, as if wondering why some expected friend did not come. His chief occupation seemed to be in smoking a cigar, and the lurid spark of its end revealed his position to the watchful Lady Beatrice wherever he retreated into the dense shadows beyond the circle illumined by the gas-lamps.

Presently the area door of Hampton House opened, and the same old woman, apparently, who had passed in a little while before, climbed up into the gloomy street, and hobbled away, with an exact imitation of the Lady Beatrice's assumed painful walk.

Rush bent forward, and looked at the woman narrowly, as she walked under the gas-lamp, but his scrutiny satisfied him that the woman was the same who had recently passed in, and that she was by no means the object of his espionage.

"Yes," said the Lady Beatrice, peering out from between her shutters, "the man is a detective. Adlowe has hired him, thinking to discover where I spent last evening, and what my secret is. He wanted to get some hold upon me. He certainly can have no actual suspicion that Geoffrey Trevalyan lives. You are outwitted Mr. Detective—outwitted Lord Adlowe!"

With a light mocking laugh, which belonged entirely to her character of the Lady Beatrice Hampton, she closed the shutters, returned to her dressing-room, and proceeded with her toilette.

"Let me see," she mused. "This is the night of Lady Derwent's ball. I will dress for it now, and then go down and talk with my father. He may have something to say to me concerning his discovery of last night!"

The tiring woman had made the task of dressing easy, having laid out every article necessary for the evening toilette of her mistress. Dressing-cases and jewel-caskets stood open, the gold mountings of the former and the costly contents of the latter glittering, sparkling, shimmering in the glowing light.

Her ladyship stood before her long mirrors in their frames of carved ivory, and brushed out the dusky lengths of her perfumed hair. Then she plaited and gathered it into a complicated arrangement after the fashion of to-day, a fashion which she never indulged in at the Laurels. She then attired herself in her evening robes—an amber satin dress, with an over-dress of point lace, and adorned her hair, her neck, her arms, and her waist with the priceless Hampton diamonds.

Thus equipped, and with her jewelled fan in her hand, she stepped back from her mirror the Lady Beatrice Hampton again, cold and haughty as an iceberg. She had put on her society character with her society robes, and resolutely banished the softer graces, the sunny manner, and the tender smiles which belonged to the Countess Arevalo. She had scarcely turned from her glittering reflection, when the door of the inner chamber opened, and Mary Fleck, in her proper dress, and with a satisfied manner, entered her presence.

"It's all right, my lady," she said, "I walked to a safe distance, and took off my disguise in a dark alley-way. I came back with it under my arm, and that spy down there don't suspect that I am the old woman that went out."

"Thank you, Mary, my faithful foster-sister!" said the Lady Beatrice, warmly. "I shall know how to reward your devotion to me."

"The only reward I desire," returned the tiring-woman, with the fervour of truth, "is to see your ladyship free to acknowledge the one you love—to see your pretty children recognised by the world as yours! What would my lord, the earl, say to our high-spirited, noble-hearted master Juan? What would he say to our beautiful and sweet Lady Giralda? What would he say to our gentle, lovely Master Fay?"

"Hush, Mary!" said the Lady Beatrice. "Do not breathe their names within these walls! I tremble lest some evil wind should catch the sound and bear it to my father's ears."

She clasped the hand of her faithful servitress, and then turned to quit the room.

"Stay in my rooms while I am gone, Mary," she said, pausing at the threshold. "Keep the door locked as usual until my return."

She took her opera cloak and hood on her arm, and quitted the apartment, descending the stairs to the drawing-room.

Lord Hampton, in full evening dress, sat alone by the pleasant hearth. He was the picture of gloom and desolation, looking like one upon whom a great trouble was pressing heavily.

He started up, his countenance lightening as his daughter swept into his presence.

Even in his anger and grief he could not but remark to himself how royally beautiful she was. No fairer vision ever greeted a proud father's gaze. Stately, haughty, and impassive, with a rare dignity that would have befitted a queen, there was nothing overbearing or supercilious in the manner of the Lady Beatrice. While her heart seemed as cold as Arctic snows, her glorious eyes beamed with a keen and active intelligence, and her haughtiness was tempered with a sweet courtesy which was as grateful as a south wind in winter. With her queenly attire setting off her glittering beauty, the Lady Beatrice was a magnificent representation of an ideal Cleopatra.

It seemed impossible, looking at her now, that those scarlet lips should ever have been curved in sunny smiles—that those radiant eyes should ever have glowed with tenderness and love.

It seemed impossible that she could be the home angel of the Laurels.

She inclined her head in a stately courtesy to her gray haired father, who returned her salutation gravely, even coldly.

"Sit down, Beatrice," he said, indicating a chair near his own. "You are dressed for Lady Derwent's I see. We will not need to go for three hours yet. We will have a frank talk together."

The Lady Beatrice tossed her white opera wrappings upon a sofa, and accepted the proffered chair.

"Well, my father," she said, after a pause, as the earl resumed his seat and sank into silence. "You wished to speak to me of Lord Adlowe, perhaps?"

"No, no, Beatrice, it is of yourself I would speak!" cried the earl, impetuously. "I talked with you last evening, but you put me off with idle words. You are living a monstrous mystery under my own eyes! What does it all mean? As your father, I command you to answer me?"

The Lady Beatrice feigned a cold surprise.

"You speak in riddles, papa," she said quietly.

"You understand me, Beatrice. You know what I mean! Last night a cry of fire was raised. The smoke issued from your chamber. Adlowe and I burst in your door. I expected to find you drugged with opium, or—or worse!" and the earl's passionate tones trembled, and his pale face flushed. "But the reality was worse than my anticipations! I found you—gone!"

"Well, what of that, papa?" asked the Lady Beatrice, speaking lightly. "You speak as if my absence had been a frightful calamity!"

The earl looked at her searchingly.

"You do not see what a revelation it was to me, Beatrice," he said, striving to speak more calmly. "I found your jewels heaped together, your dress on your closet floor. I knew that in your absence of last night, I had learned the secret you have so jealously guarded all these years! Your mysterious seclusions have been simply the cover of similar absences! While I have thought of you as possibly the prey of a debasing habit, you have been away from the shelter of my roof. I know not where. I know not with whom! This mystery is appalling—is disgraceful!"

"Hush, father!" said the Lady Beatrice Hampton, with an imperious gesture. "Do not link the word disgraceful with the name of Beatrice Hampton! Her kindling cheeks and flashing eyes warned the earl that such a coupling would be an insult undeserved by his daughter.

Puzzled and bewildered, he wrung his hands helplessly.

"What am I to think?" he cried, his anger yielding to grief. "I know I have never been a demonstrative father, Beatrice; but I have loved you as few fathers love their children! I never taught you to confide in me. You lost your mother early. Then came your cruel lesson learned from that villain, Geoffrey Trevalyan, whose ashes I could curse when I look upon you! Beatrice, have you no heart? Does my anguish stir no chord in your soul? I pray heaven that should you ever marry, and should children be born to you, that they may love you more than my child loves me!"

The Lady Beatrice turned her face beyond the power of his fearful gaze. Her statuesque figure drooped a little.

"Father," she said, in a tone softer than he had ever heard her use before, "as you say, you were never a demonstrative father. You never used to caress me, or tell me that you loved me. I knew that you were proud of me. I loved you, father. I love you now very dearly, very tenderly. But the affair you spoke of just now seemed to have changed my whole nature. I loved Geoffrey Trevalyan; our betrothal had your hearty approbation. You desired, more than all things else to link the fortunes of Hampton and Trevalyan. Had Geoffrey not died, but lived to return to England, you might to-day have seen your daughter a happy wife, and have gathered your grandchildren around your knees."

"Never!" said the earl, violently. "I would recognise no grandchild in whose veins flowed the blood of that midnight assassin and robber. Geoffrey Trevalyan my son-in-law! Not even if Lord Trevalyan had forgiven his vile nephew would I have trusted your happiness to him, or linked our proud name to his infamous one. I heard Lord Trevalyan say, not long since, that if his degenerate nephew by some strange providence still existed, as Lord Adlowe had once or twice fancied possible, he would employ every detective in the police force to hunt him out and bring him to a rightful punishment. I would assist him in a search for Geoffrey Trevalyan, should he chance to live. But this is wild talk," he added. "Happily, Geoffrey is dead."

"Yet you loved Geoffrey once," said the Lady Beatrice, in a subdued tone. "One would think, father, that Lord Trevalyan would want to screen Geoffrey, instead of delivering him up to the law. Geoffrey was his brother's son, his own heir apparent, the bearer of his name. Geoffrey's disgrace would be a family disgrace."

"No one would blame the uncle for his nephew's crime," said the earl, briefly. "The marquis rightly

loathes his nephew. I consider that if Geoffrey had lived, Lord Trevalyan would have been justified in any act, to prevent Geoffrey's inheriting his titles and fortunes. The disgrace of his living would be worse than any disgrace of merited punishment."

"It is as well that Geoffrey is dead," said the Lady Beatrice, with a shiver. "Had he chanced to live, and return, you would have given him up to his enemies, had they failed to discover him. Poor Geoffrey! I loved him, papa. You encouraged that love. You turned from him in this trouble. My heart is with him now—my poor Geoffrey!"

"We will talk no more of him," said the earl. "It is strange, how, in our private talks, the name of Geoffrey Trevalyan always creeps in. The fortunes of Trevalyan and Hampton will be united when you marry Lord Adlowe. And that brings us back to my discovery of last evening. Again, Beatrice, as your father, I command, nay, I entreat you to confide to me your secret."

The Lady Beatrice shivered again, as with cold. "Father," she said, calmly, after a long silence. "You do not act the part of a wise man in judging of my seclusions by my absence of last evening. Because I was absent once, it does not follow that I am always absent when my doors are locked. I confess that I was out last evening. But you should have had sufficient confidence in your daughter to believe and trust in her honour and wisdom. I am no child, that my goings and comings should be questioned."

"But the mystery, Beatrice?" cried her father, in a tone of anguish.

"Since you force me to confess my whereabouts," exclaimed the Lady Beatrice, a scarlet glow burning on either white cheek, "I will tell you. I was disgusted with myself—with Adlowe—with the world. I went upstairs, changed my dress, and hurried out for a walk. I went where I have been before,"—and her proud voice faltered—"to visit an obscure family to whom my presence brings sunlight and happiness. Shall I give you a list of my charities, father?"

The gloom cleared away from the earl's face, and all traces of his anger vanished.

"No, no, Beatrice," he said, heartily. "You never told a falsehood in your life. I would stake my honour on your truthfulness. I believe that last night you visited some poor people. But why were you gone all night? Why were you absent all day?"

"I stopped with friends."

"I did not see you come in, Beatrice. I have watched for you all day," said the earl, gravely.

"You still distrust me, then? Be it so, father," cried the Lady Beatrice, a passionate tremor underlying her cold tones, as fire might underlie ice. "If I am to give an account of my every action, I may as well sink into my dotage at once. If one is not competent to be trusted with one's self at four-and-thirty, one had better be in an asylum for imbeciles."

The shadow returned to Lord Hampton's countenance.

"I shall interfere with you no more, Beatrice," he said, coldly; "so long as you consent to marry Lord Adlowe, cherish your secrets and your mysteries. I shall close my eyes to them. You have erected an icy barrier between yourself and your father. If it is ever removed it must be by your hand, not mine. As you do not care for my opinion, you will not be grieved to hear that I cling to my original idea—that you are a slave to some drug or liquor."

He looked searchingly at his daughter, and marked the red tinge that swept up to her cheeks.

"Think what you will, father," said the Lady Beatrice. "But henceforth let there be silence between us on this subject. As to Lord Adlowe, I will give him his answer when he shall ask for it. One word more, father," she added, with solemn earnestness. "You shall never have occasion to blush for me. I will be a true and faithful daughter to you. I will love you and cherish you; but let the mystery of my life remain for ever sealed to you! Forget that there is one. Remember only that I am an honourable woman!"

Her manner was even more impressive than her words.

Lord Hampton saw that the conversation was closed. He did not venture to reopen it. With a strangely burdened heart, he sat by his fireside in silence till the hour arrived for their departure for the ball.

The Lady Beatrice Hampton was the gayest of the gay that night. Her crown as belle and beauty received new laurels. She had never been wittier or apparently more joyous. Her father, looking at her now and then, reiterated to himself his assertion that

she had no heart. Her suitors and admirers shared the earl's sentiment, and talked among themselves of the "Hampton Sphinx" and the "Beautiful Mystery." Little did they dream where her heart was, even in that gay hour! Little did they dream of the secret hidden in her soul!

(To be continued.)

DR. HOOKER has been nominated Examiner in Botany for the Natural Sciences Tripos at Cambridge, and Mr. W. Savory for the degree of Master in Surgery.

ANECDOTE OF THE EX-EMPRESS OF MEXICO.—A melancholy little incident is related of the ex-Empress Charlotte. This unfortunate princess has been staying for some time at Spa. The other day she insisted with such vehemence on playing at roulette that it was impossible to restrain her. On approaching the table she deliberately placed a gold piece on the number 19. The wheel turned, and, though 37 chances were against her, she won. She smiled sadly, took up the money, and quietly left the room. On her way out a poor man passed by. She gave him all the money, with the injunction that he was to "pray for him." It is known that the Empress Charlotte never pronounces the name of Maximilian.

LIKE A DEWDROP.

CHAPTER I.

"TESSA, come here."

The voice had in it a startled earnestness which quickly roused Therese Jardenier from the dreamy mood which had crept upon her, as she sat there in the bay window, her slender figure half veiled in the lace curtains, the purple mists of twilight flooding her face—a face sweet and fair with the winning graces of early girlhood, with clear, deep eyes, and shy, sensitive lips, and framed in soft bands of glossy hair, of a brown which matched the eyes, not golden, but rich and warm with the same hue which stains the nuts that ripen in autumn noons.

Tessa rose to her feet at once, and, emerging from behind the foamy veil of the curtains, crossed the luxurious drawing-room, and approached Mrs. Wilfred Worth, who stood in the hall doorway, a little slip of paper fluttering from her jewelled fingers. As she came to the door she met the merry glance of a handsome young fellow who was industriously tying up roses on the lawn below, and gave a gay nod in response.

"What is it, Aunt Wilfred?" asked Tessa, wondering at the nervous look on the plump, florid face of her relative and protectress; "anything unexpected?"

"Unexpected, indeed!" echoed the lady; "do you not see that it is a telegram?"

"My uncle is not hurt?" asked the girl, quickly.

"Nothing has happened to him on his journey?"

"Your uncle! Which uncle?" repeated the lady, testily.

"My Uncle Wilfred, of course," returned Therese. But there came a sudden, startled glinting across the eyes, as she added, hurriedly, "You can't mean that it has anything to do with Uncle Ralph?"

"Exactly that," returned Mrs. Wilfred Worth, turning, and looking curiously into the girl's face.

"The dispatch is more for you than for me. Read it, Tessa." And she put the paper, which brought so much excitement into the household, into the girl's hand.

Therese Jardenier's brown eyes dilated with a sudden terror, and for a moment the characters were all swimming in such a dizzy haze that she could not decipher a single word, then she was able to read the whole plainly.

"MR. OR MRS. WILFRED WORTH:—We have just arrived from Calcutta. Uncle Ralph is dying. He begs and implores that you will bring Therese, with all haste, that he may see her before he dies, and that the ceremony may receive his dying blessing. No time is to be lost. We are at Grosvenor Square. "J. J."

The paper fluttered down from her hands, as the girl clasped them in a sudden gesture, whether of horror, or simple grief at the sorrowful news of her uncle's danger, Mrs. Wilfred could not quite decide.

"You see, child, that there is no time to be lost. Dear me! what a disagreeable, unfortunate affair! To have you married in this haste, at a deathbed, after all my grand anticipations of a great wedding! It is preposterous!"

The lady did not say it precisely, but her tone and looks implied that she thought it very unkind and eccentric in Mr. Ralph Jardenier to take to dying in this abrupt and awkward fashion.

"What time does the express train leave at W—? Of course, we must take that. Have you

ordered the carriage? I will run up and put on my bonnet," exclaimed Tessa, turning around.

"But on your bonnet, indeed! Will you go up to London to be married in that morning-dress? What a child you are, Tessa!"

Therese looked down at the pretty pink cashmere with its velvet facings, dubiously.

"But it cannot matter; of course no one will be there. I will put on that gray travelling dress; it will be most suitable of anything. To think of poor Uncle Ralph dying!"

"The gray travelling-dress? Do you know a girl is not likely to be a bride but once? Do you forget that Jasper Jardenier will see you for the first time? Or have you really no thought at all for him? You are such a strange girl, Tessa. No one can ever make you out. It's well you have me to think for you. I have already set Sara to rummage over your wardrobe and mine, to find something decent. There was a lace dress you wore in the *tableaux*, and, thank goodness! a veil can be bought ready made. You may put on your travelling-dress, and come down for luncheon at once. We have just an hour before starting."

"A whole hour!" repeated Tessa, impatiently; "and poor Uncle Ralph counting every minute perhaps. Is there no quicker route?"

"No; I sent John to ask. This train does not lose a moment, except to take in water, and will bring us there in the shortest time. If only your uncle were here!"

Therese turned around, and went slowly upstairs.

By this time the young man, all the while whistling merrily over the rose trellises, came sauntering up the steps, aware that something unusual was stirring.

"Tessa! Tessa!" called he; "come out here."

Mrs. Wilfred heard, and came to the door.

"Ned Middleton, be quiet! Don't you know that Therese has other things to draw her attention, now? You know very well how often I have warned you of her destination. I hope and trust you will behave yourself, and not be silly, to make me angry and ashamed that I ever allowed my husband to take the guardianship of such a wild fellow! Tessa and I are going to start for London in an hour, and you are to stay here and behave yourself."

"Tessa going to London!" ejaculated the youth, making a ring of the red lips under the light moustache. "What stupendous event has called for such a remarkable movement? Enlighten me, I beseech you, for I am amazed."

Mrs. Wilfred's cold, blue eyes flickered uneasily as she pointed to the slip of paper lying on the hall floor.

"You will find the explanation there; I have no time to waste."

And she walked off into the sitting-room, but took a position at the threshold, nevertheless, from whence she could see the young man's movements. The angry flush which swept off the gay, listless expression of his face, the fiery sparkle which came to his bright, blue eye, the sudden quivering of his lips, confirmed the suspicion which had been strengthening for the last month or so. He tore the innocent paper into a dozen pieces, flung them from him, and went out of the door like a whirlwind.

"Oh, these young folks! There is no end to the trouble they make. Here I have warned and warned, all the time. I told Mr. Wilfred there was no sense in bringing his ward here in company with Tessa. I knew they would fall in love with each other, just because they ought not. If we'd wanted to make the match, they'd have been as obstinate as possible. But, just because it couldn't be! Oh, dear! Mr. Ralph Jardenier sha'n't blame me for it, nor his adopted son. If they will only be reasonable. I am more sure of Tessa, though I can't make her out either; but I know I can count upon Ned's being as provoking as possible."

Such were Mrs. Wilfred's perturbed ruminations as she walked off to the luncheon-tray.

Tessa, meanwhile, without Sara's assistance, had hunted up her travelling dress, and put it on. She came down in it looking as demure as a Quaker, and yet as sweet and fair as a rose. But her face was not so easily read. Mrs. Wilfred eyed it suspiciously, while she poured out the cup of coffee, and handed her the sandwiches.

"You must eat, Tessa. You will need it; for, after the tedious ride on the railway, will come that agitating, trying meeting. Sara is going with us, and John, and that will take some of the care from me. But you must eat, Tessa."

"I will have some more coffee, thank you; but I don't seem to have any appetite," returned the girl, trying to speak steadily; but with a momentary tremor in her voice, which the watchful duennas did not lose.

"It isn't strange, I am sure," murmured Mrs.

Wilfred, pensively. "This is a most abrupt breaking up of your life with us. Only the exigencies of the case justify such peremptory movement. We can't tell, I suppose, whether you will come back here after—ahem!—after you are married to Mr. Jasper Jardenier, or not. Perhaps he will take you on a tour through Northern Europe; there was some such talk once, I remember, in one of Ralph's letters. You could get a *trousseau* in Paris, and have a grand reception on your return, to make up for this gloomy wedding—"

"Don't—oh, don't," faltered Tessa, suddenly; "the loss of the wedding finery and its festival will be the lightest of my regrets. Just now I can only think of my uncle lying on his deathbed. And his last letter was so full of joyful anticipations of his return to England."

And Therese Jardenier pushed back from the table, and went to the window, saying, restlessly:

"It is surely time for the carriage."

Mrs. Wilfred glanced at the French clock on the mantel.

"We have half-an-hour yet. But you may tell Sara to bring the bonnets down. The trunks were taken out to the stable and strapped on to the carriage."

Therese left her talking, and went out into the garden. Her aunt's words were still floating dreamily through her mind. Perhaps she was really not to return at all to Wilfred Terrace. Was she to be thus suddenly cut adrift from her old life, to be launched, so unprepared, upon a new and strange existence? Her eyes went roaming around, taking their farewell of a home which had been very pleasant, and the only one she had known for the last ten years. It was not wonderful, it could hardly have been otherwise, and her heart was so filled with sorrowful emotion, that the soft mist of tears rose to her eyes.

Ned Middleton, finding her thus, put his own construction upon it.

"Tessa," exclaimed he, passionately, "are you going to submit to this sacrifice? Will you give yourself so blindly to this stranger?"

She shook off her tears, and a little colour crept over the pale cheeks.

"You know very well, Ned, that I have always acknowledged my engagement to Jasper," she answered.

"And I know very well that you do not love him," he returned, angrily. "It is a shameful sacrifice for you to marry, thus suddenly, a man about whom you know nothing."

"Know nothing! Have I not known everything about him through uncle's letters and his own? Have I not every assurance that he is good, and brave, and honourable?" returned the girl, with a show of spirit which was exceedingly becoming, for the pale cheek glowed and the soft eyes kindled.

"You know that of a dozen gentlemen hereabouts," answered the young man, sarcastically. "Are you, therefore, willing to marry them? But I am not sure of this case; you are taking the evidence of the parties most interested for your statement of facts. Is that really wise?"

"I think you are very unkind, Ned," faltered she, moving hastily away from him.

He caught at the folds of the gray dress to detain her, and cried, passionately:

"Unkind! Oh, Therese Jardenier, do you not know why? Do you not see that I am stung, crazed, maddened by this wicked arrangement which you look so coolly? Do you not see that I, who love you so devotedly, must lose you to give you to one who does not, who cannot care for you; a man upon whose face you have never looked."

"I have seen his portrait; you know I have had it these two years."

And the nervous fingers pulled at the gold chain at her belt, and fastened upon the jewelled locket there.

"A gift from your uncle—he who desires to keep his fortune together, whether your heart is broken or not! I wonder, Tessa, you do not resent it, that this grim lover makes no professions for himself. Oh, Tessa, Tessa! I thought you had a heart. I have been comforting myself that, when this cruel summons came, you would find spirit enough to resist it. I was so sure you loved me, Tessa."

The handsome face was facing hers, the eyes mournful and beseeching. She coloured once more, and her voice was a little husky, as she replied to him:

"You had no right to think it, Ned. I told you a long while ago, when you said something of this sort, that you must never think or speak of it again. I told you I should fulfil my uncle's wish, and should be angry with you if you doubted it. You made me think you agreed to it. You asked me only to be friends."

"Friends!" repeated the youth, bitterly; "was it only from friendship that you smiled upon me, and

rode with me, and at the parties allowed me always to be your favoured partner?"

"Only from friendship," answered Tessa, firmly, "and because I believed you were sincere, and had accepted my warning."

"It is false!" retorted he, with increased vehemence. "I am not so blind. You return my love, but you are proud and ambitious, and you will not lose this fine India fortune. You mean to carry it off with a brave show, but I am not deceived. I know why your cheek flushed beneath my admiring looks, how your eyes answered my tenderness, whether your lips were dumb or no. I tell you that I have gained your heart, and some time, after you are fettered to this cold, unloving man, you will wake up to the bitter truth, and lament your folly."

The wide, brown eyes were haughty, but the tremulous lips had compassion.

"Ned," said she, "I will forgive your unkindness, because I know your hasty temper, and I see how you are hurt and grieved by this sudden news. But you are mistaken, entirely mistaken. I liked your company, I have enjoyed many pleasant hours with you, believing you kept your promise, and cared for me as a brother might; but I have kept my heart safe and pure for—the husband coming over the water to me, with my generous uncle's blessing!"

She lifted her head proudly, drew away her dress from his detaining fingers, and went hastily back to the house. Ned Middleton looked after her with eyes vividly flaming with mingling love and resentment.

"She shall repent this cruel scorn!" muttered he, stamping his foot on the gravelled walk.

Half-an-hour after, the carriage bore away its party to the express train, Ned Middleton, on his splendid bay horse, dashed out the gateway. The horse came home, foamy and spent, led by a lad hired at the station, who brought information that its master had taken the last seat in a carriage just as the train was dashing off.

CHAPTER II.

A FIGURE, motionless and rigid, and with a face as white almost as a statue of marble, stood in the curtained recess of the private parlour in the great London hotel.

Mrs. Wilfred came in a moment, with eyes red with weeping, and took her hand.

"Come, Tessa, he is so impatient to see you. He wants you to come to him alone before—before we go to get you ready for the ceremony. Be prepared to find him very weak, exhausted, terribly changed, child, but he has still the same resolute, determined spirit."

Tessa's grave eyes never left her face.

"Oh!" said she, "it is my uncle who wishes to see me first?"

"Certainly. I only saw Ralph Jardenier a moment. He went out to make some arrangement about the clergyman, I suppose. He is not exactly like his portraits, but darker, graver, and, I think, a little sterner. Come, Tessa."

She took the girl's hand, which was icy cold, and with an inward flood of compassion and commiseration, led her on through the suite of rooms vacated to give quiet to the sick man, then softly opening a chamber door, pushed her gently into the room, and retreated again.

Although her heart seemed to be standing still within her breast, Therese Jardenier kept herself composed and calm. She saw the deathly face lying propped up among the pillows, and met the yearning, pathetic glance of the glassy eye.

"Oh, Uncle Ralph—Uncle Ralph!" cried out the girl.

And gliding across the room, she fell down upon her knees by the bedside, seizing in hers the listless hand that fell over the coverlet.

"My darling—my darling!" ejaculated the sick man, strong excitement lending to his voice its accustomed strength and fulness. "This is not the glad meeting we planned."

"Is there no hope? Has everything been tried?" faltered Tessa, looking piteously into the changed, haggard face.

"Everything. I have ceased to struggle. So heaven rebukes our worldly plans. I remained there to complete my business settlements a little more satisfactorily, and this is the price I pay."

"Dear, dear Uncle Ralph!"

"You have not forgotten your old affection. Lift up your face, Tessa, and let me read it, to see if it is all your childhood promised, and your letters confirmed."

She looked up sorrowfully, but fearlessly, and the clear, brown eyes did not shrink nor bleach. The sick man drew one long, deep breath of relief.

"Now I can die content," said he. "You are all I could ask, all that he will require to make his true happiness. Tessa, you know why I have sent for you. Before I die I am to see the glad confirmation of my dearest hopes, the realisation of my most cherished wish. The daughter of my only brother, the little orphan I have reared and cherished, is to marry the son I have adopted into my affections; the son, Tessa, of the only woman I ever loved, of the only woman who loved me, who was cruelly torn from me by her father's pitiless ambition. You will remember that, Tessa, my darling; you must never forget that Jasper, who has taken my name, and claims my love and fortune, is the son of her who should have been my wife, and in giving you to each other, I give to both the fortune I have spent my life in gathering. I have taught you both to expect and to be content with this union. I am thankful to know you both, and be certain you are formed to make each other happy. Go now, my darling, and come back in your bridal robes; and try to put away all sorrow, for I assure you I am content and happy to die, if, before my eyes close, I see you Jasper's wife."

Therese rose and touched her lips to the cold forehead. Perhaps he saw the clear, brown eyes glancing wistfully towards the door, for he said, gently:

"It was a whim of Jasper's, that he would rather see you as his bride, at your first meeting. But you cannot feel like strangers; your letters must have made you thoroughly acquainted. I have tried to keep you each constantly in each other's mind. Heaven grant that you may love each other as sincerely as I have hoped. But I must rest a little now, to have strength enough to give my dying blessing to your marriage. Touch the bell to call them back, for I sent them all away that I might see you alone. Let them dress you like a bride, for I want you to be beautiful to Jasper's eyes, my darling. Remember that; always make yourself fair to him, for though few would guess it, he has an artist's eye."

She went out, murmuring, softly:

"How fondly his thoughts turn to Jasper! How deep and tender his affection must be! Surely Jasper must be very grand and noble—like the ideal I have pictured him."

And a soft blush shone a moment over her pale cheek, and there was a dreamy content in the clear, deep eyes, while Sara and Mrs. Wilfred were arranging the hurried bridal finery, which deepened still further the latter's impression that there was no understanding Tessa.

Sara had done credit to her dexterity and taste in the limited time, although unlimited means, allowed her. She came back from her hasty shopping expedition with a veil which was worthy of a princess, her basket filled with orange blossoms, and even plenty of wedding favours for the little corps of attendants. Perking her head on one side, and taking one last criticising look, Sara pronounced herself satisfied, and retreated.

"Come and look at yourself, Tessa," said Mrs. Wilfred. "I declare I am immensely relieved that you look so nicely, for I've just discovered that there are two or three strangers to be present, and among them that magnificent Miss Treloarne, who has been such a belle in Calcutta. It seems she come over in their party, and has been extremely kind to Mr. Jardenier."

Tessa hung back a moment, and then went forward to the great full length mirror. Was that the little Tessa who had thought to come in the pink mourning dress.

She hardly knew herself in that cloud of lace swaying around her head, with the orange-blossoms garlanding the brown hair, and the trailing green creeping through the misty veil, and touching timidly the slender throat; the brown eyes looked up at her with a shy, but tender smile, and Tessa's lips smiled back, loving, trusting child! She was no longer afraid, and a sweet glad hope calmed the strangeness and sadness in her heart.

In a moment, just a little longer, and Jasper Jardenier would come to look his first upon his bride. Somehow she had never looked so slight, and small, and childish before, nor never more sweet, and pure, and fair. Mrs. Wilfred thought so, and whispered to Sara:

"I am glad, after all, we allowed her to have her way about wearing my pearls; they would have spoiled her fairy look."

"She looks more like a dewdrop, or a snowflake. Nothing, I am sure, could be more exquisite!"

So, perhaps thought someone else, for, at that moment, there was a gentle tap at the door, and a lady, wonderfully imperial in her beauty—as different from the bride, as a dahlia from a pansy—came gliding in, with a stately grace.

"Would Miss Jardenier excuse her boldness? She came to offer her humble token of friendly interest!" And extending her bouquet, with its frosted silver

holder, the lady dropped a stately courtesy, and announced herself Miss Agatha Trehorne.

Tessa smiled timidly—but graciously, until she lifted her eyes to the donor's face; then, she scarcely knew why, she felt a cold shiver stealing over her. Those brilliant blue eyes seemed to have an unshelved steel in every glance—that strange, mesmerizing influence which we all sometimes know crept into every fibre of her frame, chilling it as with a deadly miasma. The soft glow faded out of her face, and instead there came a dreary, frightened look, which spoiled the winning grace that had charmed Sarah and Mrs. Wilfred.

Who was this beautiful woman? What would she do, or what had she done, to hurt her so? Tessa knew her at once, as a noble Newfoundland knows a treacherous man under any guise—instinctively knew her for an enemy. She looked at the bouquet, thanked her coldly, and said she was afraid so many flowers would be too much for the sick man.

Miss Trehorne bit her ruby lip, and, with one of those dazzling smiles of hers, withdrew, trailing the blue satin train behind her.

"What a magnificent creature!" ejaculated Mrs. Wilfred, in ecstasy. "How could you be so rude, Tessa? Did you ever see such a brilliant complexion before, Sara?"

"Or such hair!" echoed Sara. "It was like tendrils of spun gold; and what stateliness of carriage!"

And at every ejaculation, little Tessa, there in her bridal veil, felt her heart sinking lower and lower. She was a friend of Jasper's, this beautiful woman. Was that why every look of those brilliant blue eyes had seemed to stab her through? But there was no time to indulge in these thoughts. A tap at the door announced another arrival. This time, however, it was Mr. Jardenier's servant, who glanced over curiously, but with the utmost respect, towards the veiled figure.

"If you please, madam, everything is ready, and the clergyman is there in my master's room."

"Will he come for me, or am I to go there alone?" asked Tessa, hastily, stepping forward and looking into the man's face with such an expression of wistful appeal that, from that minute, Gates was her devoted slave.

"Indeed, my lady, I think he should come to you. I will speak with him."

And he withdrew, but was so long away that Tessa, nervous and anxious, stopped to the door and looked out into the corridor. She was just in time to witness a little farewell scene—a dark-haired gentleman bending over a fair white hand, and to catch the last glimpse of a blue satin trail, and she met, likewise, a glance full of stern grief and angry bitterness. Cold and white, shivering with a sudden sharp pang, as well as wretched conviction, Tessa stood there, waiting for her bridegroom.

He bowed gravely, and attempted a smile, but it was a wretched failure.

"It is Therese, of course. Your uncle is waiting for us," he said, with a little start of surprise, as the sweet, pale face was revealed to him.

Tessa moved her lips, but they gave forth no sound. Mrs. Wilfred and Sara came out, and there was therefore no need of reply. Jasper Jardenier drew her hand through his arm, and led her on. It was all one dizzy haze to the poor child, when she found herself standing before this grave clergyman, beside this stern, dark man, who was Jasper, and yet so unlike the Jasper she had dreamed about. She repeated the responses mechanically, was aware when the ring was slipped upon her finger for she felt its icy touch; but she scarcely realised the meaning of it all, until the last word of benediction was spoken, and her uncle, from his couch, broke in upon it in a voice of tremulous joy.

"It is over! Now I can die happy! Come, my children, come to me. Jasper, bring your wife for my dying blessing."

He took her hand, this Jasper who was now her husband. Tessa went with him, and sank down upon her knees beside the bed.

"Heaven for ever bless you, my good, true children! I know you are calculated to ensure each others' happiness. Do not wear mourning in your garments or in your hearts, for my sake, for you have given me the dearest wish of my life, and I die happy."

He had made a great exertion to speak calmly, and had even raised himself enough to bring a thin, cold hand to the bowed head beside him; but suddenly his strength gave way. He fell back, gasping frightfully for breath—his eyes closed—a still deadlier pallor settled on his face.

The half-dozen guests, standing in a knot at the door, had the grace to retreat, while the physician came forward, hastily, exclaiming:

"I expected it. I told him he was using the little life left him in the most reckless manner."

The kneeling couple lifted their heads to look anxiously and wistfully at the sufferer's face.

The convulsions ceased abruptly, the last sigh came fluttering through the lips. Ralph Jardenier was dead.

Tessa felt the sudden, strong sob which shook her husband from head to foot, and timidly laid her hand upon his shoulder. He shook it off, as he sprang up, and bent down to the dead face.

"My father! my more than father!" moaned Jasper Jardenier, in a tone of reckless anguish. "Oh, I cannot bear to lose you! Life will be unendurable without you!"

Therese Jardenier heard, and shrank back, pulling the folds of her bridal veil more closely over her face to hide its pallor and the terror in her eyes.

While she stood there dumb and uncertain how to move, or where, a tall, stately figure swept by her. Tessa's poor bewildered eyes could not help taking in all the radiance which scintillated and shone around it, from diamond ornaments, and lustrous satin, and gem-encircled wrists.

"Jasper, my poor Jasper," said Agatha Trehorne, "you must not despair. Remember that your last act has given him peace and joy. Be comforted, dear Jasper."

The nurse and valet were waiting to attend to the last offices. Jasper Jardenier stood a moment longer, and turned to leave the room, Miss Trehorne murmuring her gentle consolations. He was going, then, without a word or thought for her, and he was her husband! Tessa looked after him, anger, indignation, and a sort of blind horror at her own fate, rushed over her.

Gates saw her face, and rushed across the room to his master, speaking in a low voice, but with a glance of keen reproach.

"Sir, sir," said he, "you have forgotten your wife! You have left the bride!"

Jasper Jardenier bit his lip, and a dull red came surging into his cheek. He turned back with a hasty step, and offered his arm to Tessa. But she, poor child! had passed the limits of endurance. What with all this excitement, her long journey, and abstinence from food, Tessa did something of which her healthy young nature had never before been guilty—she slipped away from his arm, and dropped to the floor in a dead faint.

Mr. Jardenier saw something in Gate's eye which made him wince, but he pushed him aside, and himself gathered up the poor little figure in its crumpled veil, and crushed orange blossoms, and carried her in his arms to the adjoining chamber, into which Mrs. Wilfred followed, wringing her hands and ejaculating:

"What a wedding! Oh, what a wedding!"

Sara was of more service, but she was nervous and frightened, and it took her a long while to tear off the veil which, trailing over the couch, caught in their feet and retarded their efforts. It was Jasper Jardenier himself who chafed the cold hands, and sprinkled water in the white face, noticing, in a blind sort of way, how fairy-like and dainty were the proportions. He was tortured again with self-reproach, as Sara went on murmuring:

"Poor child! poor little one! I don't think she has taken a single mouthful of food since that despatch came. Nobody has had any thought for her, only for her dress, and I'm sure that was of no consequence at such a dismal wedding as this. Poor little thing! I no wonder she felt as if all the world had forsaken her. Poor, dear little Tessa!"

The new-made husband set his lip grimly, as Miss Agatha Trehorne's blue satin dress was again visible at the door.

"Can I be of any service, Jasper? If there's anything for me to do, let me know," said the silvery voice.

"Nothing at all, Miss Trehorne," replied he, quickly. "I shall attend to my wife myself, and her maid can give me all the assistance I need."

He turned his back abruptly upon her. Miss Trehorne arched her golden eyebrows, and then her lips curled into an evil sneer; but she went away at once.

Tessa revived presently, and when she was aware whose arms held her, she looked up suddenly into his face, with those innocent brown eyes of hers.

"Jasper," said Tessa, "I am not to blame for this. Do not be so cruel to me."

The husband made an imperative gesture, and Sara retreated, half in indignation, half in compassionate sympathy with the unhappy pair. Then he turned to his young wife, and still supporting her with his arm, said, gravely but kindly:

"My dear Therese, I beg your pardon for my thoughtlessness in leaving you alone. It was cruel in me, though I was so filled with grief at our friend's loss, I scarcely was aware of anything I did. I do not mean to be cruel, indeed I do not; I will do my best to be kind to you, to save you from all possible

annoyance. I shall never, I trust, fail in my respect for you, nor cease to care for your welfare. The circumstances of our marriage are very peculiar. It would be idle to expect that a meeting to-day, for the first time, there could be any warmer sentiment than mutual respect with either of us. I certainly did not expect it, nor should you, knowing all. But put aside your fears of me; I shall spare no effort to make you as happy as is possible under the circumstances, which are unfortunate, certainly; but we were both willing to make the sacrifice, for the sake of giving his last wish to one we both loved, and there is nothing to be done now but to make the best of it."

As he spoke, Jasper settled the pillows comfortably, and disengaged his arm. In the movement a button on his coat caught in a slender gold chain that was thrown around her neck, and drew forth a locket, a miniature, as was apparent to his careless glance, of some young and masculine face. The circumstance would not have obtained a moment's thought, but that Tessa, flushing hotly through all her paleness, caught it, and thrust it hastily from sight. Poor Tessa! After that speech of his, which seemed so hard and pitiless, she would have died before betraying to him how she had cherished his portrait, which her wise uncle had sent to her, with a letter of the most flattering encomiums; how she had dreamed over it of the gallant and noble bridegroom coming across the Indian Ocean to crown her with his love.

"It is very trying for us," repeated Jasper Jardenier, coldly. "The heart we may be unable to control, but over our honour and integrity we have guardianship, and I assure you, it will be better for your own happiness that such memories of the past as that should be put away entirely."

"I shall never wear it again—I will never look at it again!" exclaimed Tessa, in a tone half suffocated with anger and shame.

"Now I will send you some refreshment. You have taken nothing at all, they tell me, which is very unwise. And you need rest. I will consult you another time in reference to our future arrangements."

He bowed and was gone, and Tessa turned her poor drenched face to the pillow, and wondered how Uncle Ralph could have been so blind and so cruel, and why she had ever been born.

Aunt Wilfred had declared herself quite used up by such a series of exciting and distressing events, and had taken to her bed; and Sara was called away to her, just as soon as she had helped Tessa exchange her lace dress for a negligé.

When the luncheon-tray came up, Tessa was sitting in the great arm-chair, her head leaning against its velvet cushion, her arms lying listlessly in her lap, and her hands clasped, one over the other, but that with the wedding ring uppermost. Mr. Jardenier followed up the tray, and, before the eyes of the waiter, was all kindness and familiarity.

"I came to make sure that you take the refreshment you need. Since you are so imprudent with yourself, it is plain you must have someone to look after you. I ventured to order the coffee strong, because I knew you needed it," said he. And drawing up the little table to her chair, he devoted himself to her needs.

Therese gained composure through pride. He should not guess how much she grieved at the lack of a husband's affection. She took the food quietly, and allowed him to order the second cup of coffee. And presently the soft pink began to gather in her cheek.

Jasper Jardenier had evidently resolved to perform the letter of his new duty, if he could not win its spirit. When the servant had gone, he sat down beside her, and in a quiet, familiar voice related to her all concerning their mutual friend who was lying so near them in his shroud.

"It is very sad that he should not have lived long enough to have enjoyed your society, Therese. It was one of his happiest anticipations, this coming home," he added, watching with keen interest, despite himself, the changing emotions flitting across the fair young face before him.

"Dear, dear Uncle Ralph!" echoed Tessa, fixing her eyes wistfully upon the window. "I learned to love him so dearly by his letters!"

Her husband smiled, as he returned:

"Yes. I remember well how I used to laugh at him. They were almost volumes, those letters. He never showed them to me, although he often read me extracts from yours. I shall be so glad to read them, if you have preserved them."

"They are all in one writing-desk at Aunt Wilfred's. If—if my trunks are sent here, they will come also," answered Therese, stammering a little at this reference to the uncertainty of her own movements, and hurrying on in her speech, that he might not have time to notice it. "The letters were really diaries, only addressed to me. He kept me almost



[A RIVAL'S OFFERING.]

as familiar with that Calcutta life as if I had been there myself."

Jasper Jardenier sighed heavily, and a look of perplexity and sorrow again clouded his brow; but glancing across at the pale, embarrassed face resting against the cushions of the easy-chair, he rallied out of it, and devoted himself to charming her out of the homesick dreariness which he imagined filled her mind.

He had a trunk brought in, which the late Mr. Jardenier had packed with Indian treasures, and, forbidding Tessa to rise, he brought them out, one after another, telling what he had said when he purchased that, and what an adventure had met him in seeking this. No other occupation could have done so much in bringing them to a friendly, unembarrassed manner.

He looked so pleased at her first smile, and was so kind in his manner, Tessa forgot her resentment and doubt, and was presently something like herself, talking freely and earnestly. Jasper, kneeling down to hold the pretty trifles for her inspection, looking up into the clear, innocent eyes, at the sweet, girlish face, became gradually aware of a sudden lightening of his burden. His foster-father might be right, after all, and happiness yet be the result of this marriage he had looked upon as such a sacrifice. She was a sweet little creature. His face continued to brighten, and in response, a timid hope kindled its gladness in Tessa's eye.

When the trunk was re-packed and pushed away, Jasper Jardenier retained a book, and read to her out of its Hindoo melodies; and after that, they ventured to talk about the future.

"Did she wish to live near Wilfred Terrace? Was she much attached to that locality?" Jasper asked.

Tessa's reply was prompt, her tone a little tremulous, and a teardrop twinkling on her eyelash.

"No; she had no attachments but were easily for-

gotten. When he read her uncle's letters, he would understand how she had been educated to understand there was another home waiting for her, for which she must keep her heart free. Perhaps no one could understand exactly how she had lived in a dreamy world of her own, without reading those letters."

Something in her tone touched him deeply. He bent down and touched his lips to her hand.

"Theresa," said he, almost solemnly, "I will try to be the kind and tender guardian he meant for you."

"Jasper," answered Tessa, wistfully, "I would do anything possible to insure your happiness. If I could have helped it—"

And there she broke off, for Gates came to the door, with a request for his master's presence. His honest face brightened perceptibly as he perceived the amicable look of the newly-married couple, and as he returned, and passed Miss Agatha Trehorne in the corridor, he nodded after her triumphantly.

"It's all right now, just as Mr. Ralph said it would be. This pretty little snowdrop will steal away from you the power you have held so wickedly. See if she don't!"

But faithful Gates calculated without a full knowledge of the discovery Miss Trehorne was exulting over. Down in the drawing-room she had chanced to notice a young man, a new arrival. His handsome face might have first arrested her attention; but it was the inquiry she heard him making which drew her to him, and made her forget her accustomed haughty exclusiveness, and step forward to say, and say sweetly:

"You are asking about my friend's wife, Mrs. Jardenier. Perhaps I can give you the information you desire."

"I mean Theresa Jardenier—my darling Tessa!" answered he, who of course was Ned Middleton, and his voice was half inarticulate through grief and

passion. "They told me she was carried out from the cruel wedding like a corpse, and no wonder, the poor sacrificed lamb!"

Miss Trehorne opened still wider those brilliant violet eyes of hers, but she still spoke sweetly:

"It was a very trying scene. Mr. Ralph Jardenier died in giving them his last blessing, and Jasper was so overcome with grief that he forgot his new-made bride, and he was rushing away out of the room when she dropped down, poor child, like a frightened bird. Oh, how white and frozen her face looked!"

And while the tone was full of gentlest compassion, the sharp eyes were watching the convulsive twitching of his face.

"Oh, my darling! Oh, my little Tessa!" sobbed Ned. "If only I could snatch her away from him!"

"It was undoubtedly the great shock of that death, and she has evidently a sensitive temperament," pursued Miss Trehorne, meditatively.

"Nonsense!" retorted the insane Ned. "It was rather that such a marriage thrust a deadly blow at her suffering heart. She tried to hide it from me, but I knew all the time how she shrank from it. Oh, my little Tessa!"

"You are a friend of Mrs. Jasper Jardenier's, an old friend, I judge," remarked Miss Agatha Trehorne, meditatively.

"Ay," muttered Ned, thrusting his white fingers fiercely into his blonde curls, "if the word mean that I worshipped the very ground she stepped upon."

"Ah!" echoed the lady, still more softly, and she retreated a little into the curtained window. "I think I understand. Then you will agree with me, that this is a very unfortunate marriage. It was so unlike Mr. Ralph Jardenier's amiable character to insist upon it!"

"Unfortunate! I call it wicked, atrocious!" returned Ned, passionately. "And as for this Jasper Jardenier, if he had been half a man, he would have been ashamed to insist upon it."

"Nay, do not blame poor Jasper. No one suffers more from their unhappy affair than he."

"How do you know? I don't believe it," was Ned's ungracious reply.

Miss Trehorne bit her lip, and flushed a little hotly. "Sir," said she, "your grief has made you forget the courtesy due to a lady."

At this, for the first time, Ned looked up at her, and perceived what a magnificent woman it was whom he had been so flatly contradicting.

"I beg your pardon. I think I am really half-crazed," said he, meekly.

"I grant it readily. Think no more of it," was her gracious reply. "And so you are a lover of this poor little child. I am sorry for her, and for you, very sorry!"

And she sighed softly, while the gold-fringed lid dropped to the cheek which was such an exquisite blending of the rose and lily.

Ned stood twisting his fingers nervously together.

"I don't want to injure Tessa," stammered he. "I have no idea what sort of a man this Jasper Jardenier is; I only know that I hate him. Perhaps I ought to go away without seeing Tessa, now that she is really his wife."

"It is very hard," repeated Miss Trehorne, "that one person's determined will should make so many others unhappy."

"Hard indeed! it is infamous!" repeated Ned, roused to renewed bitterness. "If you could only see."

"Perhaps I already know," responded the lady, in a faltering voice. "If Jasper had been free to choose, I assure you this pretty little Tessa might have been yours in spite of any intervention of his."

"He loves you, then?" exclaimed Ned in astonishment. "And, indeed," he added, with a gallant bow, "it is not so wonderful."

Miss Agatha's sigh and smile seemed to blend into one.

"I am very sorry for you. I really think it would be cruel to send you away without a word with her. I mean to see her to-morrow, and if there is an opportunity to introduce a visitor, I will do so."

"Thank you. You are very kind: I might go up freely, I suppose, because I have lived in the family so long, and her Uncle Wilfred is my guardian. But my looks, I am sure, would betray my secret to him, and I don't want to make it any harder for her—poor little Tessa!"

And this was what Miss Trehorne had discovered, and it was after this that the cruel sparkle came to her eye, and she murmured:

"A wedding and a funeral this week; but before many others have slipped away, we shall all hear of a divorce. I know Jasper Jardenier's stern notions of honour, and this weak, childish wife will walk straight into the net I shall spread."

(To be concluded in our next.)



[CECIL'S ESCAPE.]

EVELYN'S PLOT.

CHAPTER IV.

Ask me not how woman feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone!
Perchance her reason stoops and reels;
Perchance a courage not her own
Braces her mind to desperate tone. Scott.

EVELYN glanced hurriedly and anxiously from the door, but all appeared still, and she returned to Cecil trembling from head to foot, and yet more alarmed by the changed tone and the look of gloomy desperation in his eyes, than his abrupt entrance and his anxious warnings.

"Evelyn, dearest," he said, as the poor girl threw herself into his arms, "be of good cheer, I will beat them yet. I am a match for my enemies, and yet—and yet—"

And he strained her to his heart, and kissed her on the lips, and eyes, and forehead, till the tears ran down her pale cheeks like summer rain, and his own lashes were wet, and his lips quivered.

"This is folly, Evelyn," he said, controlling himself. "I have not a moment to spare. I have but come to bid you good-bye before I go."

"To bid me good-bye? Where are you going? Oh, what has happened?"

"I cannot explain. It is too long. There is not time. Come, Evelyn, have some pity and listen to me. I have got into a scrape—a bad scrape, there is no hiding it—and I must be off at once, and the less you or anyone know of me the better; and the best you can do for me is to bid me good-bye, for as long a time as is safe, and—and to give me the means of going to—"

Her cheek flushed.

"The means! Oh, Cecil, I have so little money—at least for such a purpose. May I ask—"

She was about to say "Oliver," but the remembrance that Oliver was not within reach, brought the paleness again to her cheek, and she only stammered:

"May I ask my cousin Arthur?"

"Not for your life, Evelyn. Give me what you have. Perhaps it will do."

Her fingers trembled as she opened the dressing-case where she kept her money.

It was less than usual, for the quarter was drawing to a close. And it had always been Mr. Danvers' thrifty, punctual plan to give his niece so much each quarter, without any advance or aid, save from some casual gift; since that was, he considered, the

most effectual way of keeping her in the economical habits, which he deemed the brightest virtues in man or woman.

But as this was within some three weeks of her next payment, it was but a remnant of the sum that was remaining to her; scarcely more than fifteen pounds.

"Cecil—I will give you all, but I fear it is of little use, but if you will let me know where to send to you, I will gladly, thankfully give you, or get more from—"

"Hush!" he said, and the strange trouble came again over his face. "Hush! That will not do. I can scarcely tell you where I shall be for months to come, and I may not dare to write for many a long day. Have you no more?"

"Not a sovereign!"

"But you have those!"

And his eyes rested on the coral set that she had worn that night, and which still remained on the toilette table.

"Cecil—I cannot. My corals were our mother's. We must not part with them; it is sacrilege."

His brow darkened.

"Not to save the life of your mother's son?"

She quivered.

"No, Cecil, no! Not these. I cannot, I must not, for it would not bring a blessing with it. But here, see, you shall have these."

And she took from the drawer of the case, a set of pearls, which were of great value, from their size and colour.

"There, Cecil, take these, and this, and this," she said, putting the jewels in his hand, and a small chased cross, and ring, the last birthday gift of her uncle before his illness and of Oliver on the same occasion.

As she spoke, a low, stealthy tread of feet was heard in the distance, through the open window, in the square.

A trampling and yet measured tread that is so ominous of approaching evil, when heard in the dead of night.

Evelyn rushed to the door, but her brother held her back.

"Evelyn, are you mad—or do you hold my life so cheap, that you would risk it for a trifling scruple? Listen to me. I will not keep you long. They are or ought to be, less precious than the life of your brother, and I have that to accomplish, which will need money in plenty for my safety; but remember, you must keep it in perfect secrecy; you must not let any human being know that I have been here, or that you have given me these trinkets. Be per-

fectly quiet about that, as you would save me from destruction; you promise me that, Evelyn?"

"I will refuse to say anything, Cecil. I cannot tell a falsehood."

"Not for life?"

"God can protect you, brother, and I will never say one word that can betray you, even if my own life were at stake. But do not linger, go, quick, quick, if it is so imminent."

As she spoke a ringing at the door bell was heard.

A sharp distinct ring as if the house was in a blaze, and the inmates of the house in danger of their lives.

Evelyn turned deadly faint, her lips were parted, but she did not utter a sound.

Her very being was paralysed.

Cecil's face was white too, but a resolute and desperate expression came over it.

"Evelyn, that may be my safety," he remarked, "it will divert all attention. See, here!"

And he drew the wrappings that he had taken off from the floor, and began to envelop himself in them once more, till even Evelyn could scarcely have known him.

Again that sharp, quick ring, as if life and death were at stake.

Cecil was about to rush through the window to the balcony, but the sight of lights flashing in the square, that came through the opening before the house, which was a corner one, made him draw back.

"I am lost!" he said. "The house is surrounded. I must have been tracked."

But Evelyn had recovered her presence of mind in the emergency.

"Not yet," she said. "Trust me, Cecil, I will save you yet."

And she moved across the room to a small door which was concealed by a large curtain, and which she opened quickly.

It led to the room where her maid slept.

Lizzie was soundly reposing, in the happy slumber of unconscious innocence, and freedom from care.

Evelyn glanced for a moment, and then stepping noiselessly across the room, she beckoned Cecil to follow to the opposite door.

The key was turned in the lock. But Evelyn rapidly opened it, with a slight click that made Lizzie start, and turn restlessly for a moment on her pillow. But it was her first sleep. She had sat up late for some nights, and she was fortunately too tired to be easily awakened, and in another moment the regular breathing proved that she was asleep once more.

Cecil followed Evelyn down a back staircase that

led to the servants' offices, and through a labyrinth of passages, and housemaids' closets, and sculleries, and pantries, to a back door that led out at a different part of the house and square to either the front door or her own apartments.

It was a difficult affair to unbolt and unlock the various fastenings; but when life is at stake strength is seldom wanting, and in a few moments the brother and sister felt the fresh air blowing on them from the outer world.

There were but two figures in sight, and their backs were towards them, and their attention evidently fixed on the front door of the house.

But it was evident that they were police, from the light that fell on their blue uniforms from the gas-lamp near which they stood.

For a moment the young man stood hesitating as to his next movement. Then the emergency gave him courage. He gave Evelyn a reassuring smile, and pressure of the hand.

Then motioning to her to re-enter, he went boldly forward, as if with no fear of confronting the guardians of the public peace.

But the next instant he had brushed by them, and by a sudden movement thrown one upon the ground against the sharp iron rails. Then with a sudden bound, he had cleared the corner and was lost in the dark crowd of persons who were assembled in the street front, as if attracted even at that hour by the unwonted proceedings of the night.

The men were thunder-struck by the unexpected attack; and one of them severely injured by the fall against the iron spikes.

The cry of "Murder!" "Thief!" "Fire!" and all the usual outcries in such a case, in a London crowd, was quickly raised.

But the darkness was in his favour.

The crowd was too confused, and there were so many men wrapped up in the same large overcoats to allow him to be easily distinguished in the dark night. Moreover, the large drops that had been threatening all evening to fall were now settling in a regular and violent shower of rain.

The thunder pealed. The quick flashes of lightning blinded the spectators, and even the more practised eyes of the police; and as the first dazzling flash and roar had passed Cecil Rivers had utterly disappeared from view.

Evelyn stood for some moments, till the silence that succeeded the loud peal convinced her that her brother could not have been arrested, if, indeed, he was in danger of such disgrace; a fact that she could even now scarcely take into her comprehension.

And then relocking the door, and placing the bar with her own delicate hands, she slowly and trembling retraced her steps to her own room. But the shocks and alarms of the night were not to end there.

Scarcely had she regained her apartment when the heavy sound of feet, as of men bearing a heavy burden, came on her ears. A heavy, muffled, measured tread, and then whisperings and consultations, as if a number of persons were in consultation.

But it was but for a few moments.

Then the tread was renewed.

The burden appeared relifted.

And the steps disappeared in a contrary direction to Evelyn's chamber.

She had stood with her eyes fixed upon the chamber door, and her outstretched hands trembling, as if she had seen a spectre.

Her heart misgave her but too sorely; there was but one more element that could be cast into her cup of bitter fear and trembling.

If it was Oliver that was being thus carried back to the house that he had but that day left—in helplessness—in death!—was it Cecil who had done the deed, which had thus laid him low?

Arthur was of a very different temper to his cousin—gayer, more impulsive, impetuous, and somewhat addicted to the pleasures and gaieties that tempted one of his age and station; his intellect was of an entirely different calibre to Oliver's. Even in their boyish days they had excelled in completely different studies, and mingled in different sets.

But many a time Oliver had saved his young and thoughtless cousin from serious scrapes in which his own folly and impetuosity had plunged him, and supplied his wants from his own more provident purse, and nursed him in illness when no one else was there to watch by the school-boy's couch. But then there was a closer tie than might have been expected between the cousins, albeit the difference of tastes and of age prevented the constant companionship, or the entire congeniality and confidence that might otherwise have existed.

But Arthur, with masculine tact and instinct, comprehended what Evelyn could not, that the appearance of any surveillance or alarm on his part

would certainly offend Oliver. And, with an attempt to laugh himself out of his foolish uneasiness on his brother's account, he decided to give up his intended watch and retire to bed with, however, the unusual precaution of desiring the hall porter to remain at his post till Mr. Oliver arrived.

He went to bed, but scarcely to sleep; that is, he only dozed an inquiet, unrefreshing slumber, disturbed by all kinds of imaginary noises, voices and alarms, that could scarcely have been more apparently real had he been entirely aware of passing objects; perhaps the approach of the little throng in the square, whose appearance had so terrified Evelyn and her brother, might have unconsciously awakened him.

Perhaps his own nightmare-like fancies had something to do with the alarmed start with which he sprang up, and cried out: "Who's there?" in the full idea that someone had applied for admission, and that stealthy steps had been followed by a dread knock at his door.

Then the idea struck him that he might see from his window, which overlooked the square, whether the hall lamp was extinguished. It gave so brilliant a blaze in its full glare, that there would be little difficulty in deciding whether it was burning, even from the upper windows; so he jumped from the couch, in the hope at once of shaking off the horrors that had clouded his sight, and also of ascertaining for himself whether it was a vague dream, fancy, or reality that had awakened him.

He opened the door and looked out.

All was silent, and he closed it again and returned to the bed, with a scornful laugh at his own folly. But the shadow was over him.

Was Oliver returned?

He hardly dared to go the length of either going up to Oliver's room, or to the hall, in order to decide the point.

He extinguished his own bed-lamp, which he had lighted on waking, and opening the window, he leaned forward to catch the reflection of the hall lamp over the pavement.

There was no doubt of it; the glare was there, distinct and full in the dark obscurity and the dusk of the deep night, and he was about to draw back, disappointed and anxious in the certainty thus obtained of Oliver's continued absence, when the same dull tramp that had so terrified Evelyn caught his ears.

There was evidently a group of persons to cause the sound.

He leaned again from the window. The din came nearer and more distinct.

Tramp—tramp—tramp!

Was it a march past of soldiers, making a midnight survey?

No, it was too heavy and confused for that.

Too much like men carrying a burden, and with no such sharp, regular step as the drilled soldier gains.

But the roar of the storm was at that moment renewed in its fury, after a temporary calm, and the noise and the bailing darkness of the night prevented his distinguishing even the number or the dress of the group in question, and he retired from his post, and doubted whether he should again seek the repose which he hardly hoped to find, or give up any such vain endeavour.

CHAPTER V.

What mean these confused loud cries
That wake the keepers of this house?
This house is cursed to all eternity!

ARTHUR was still standing in perplexed deliberation as to the propriety of dressing himself in the middle of an unusually uncomfortable night, and at the chance of only finding himself a nervous fool for his pains, when a sudden lull in the tempest made it but too evident that the steps he had distinguished so plainly a few moments before had stopped.

Then, as he once again cautiously opened the window, he could distinctly hear a murmur of voices, as of men in consultation and doubt. He could almost fancy he heard the number of their house mentioned, and the name of his family whispered by one of the voices rather hoarser than the rest.

But again there was silence; then the tramp was renewed till it came exactly opposite to the street-door.

Would they pass it?

His breath stopped and his heart scarcely beat as he listened.

A shiver came over him, for the steps ceased for a moment; then they slowly came up the flight of stone steps. The hall bell was pulled—strongly, fully. The door opened after a brief pause, and then he could distinguish the voices speaking with the old porter; and he even fancied he heard the cry of horror from Reynolds that some terrible sight occasioned.

He was paralysed for an instant; then he hastily ignited the lamp, and began to throw on some clothes before rushing down to ascertain the fresh horrors that might wait him.

But, before he had accomplished his brief toilette, the same measured, heavy tread came up the stairs, along the corridor, towards his room, which was in the same direction with Oliver's, and only divided from it by two small branching flights of stairs. He listened breathlessly, but the steps turned in the direction of Oliver's room, and his blood ran colder yet as he heard the sounds that spoke too plain a tale.

He was just rushing to the door, his hand on the very lock, when a loud, sharp knock applied for admission.

"Mr. Arthur—oh, why did you go to bed—why did you leave me to receive such a rabble at this hour of the night; and Mr. Oliver in that state. I did think you might have stayed up, sir," said the porter, who had been in the family since the two young men were children, and who had a kind of fatherly feeling and oversight upon them.

"What is it—what has happened, Reynolds?" gasped Arthur, striving in vain to pass the portly form that remained in the doorway.

"Oh, sir, they have carried him to his room, and the doctor is with him, sir, and his own man, it seems, stayed up, for he was there in a trice, and he's in the room helping, sir. But there's too many strangers already in the house, and a policeman wants you, sir."

Arthur stood absolutely amazed for some minutes now.

The whole thing was so bewildering, so strange and stunning; and the account given by Reynolds so confused and mysterious that he stood absolutely paralysed and confused as to his next movement. But the stunned feeling passed away, and his first impulse naturally was to rush to Oliver's room.

"Tell him to wait in the library. Light the gas, and I will be with him as soon as possible; and, harkye, Reynolds, tell the police to assist you in clearing away the crowd. It will disturb Miss Evelyn; and mind, not a word to her, for your life!"

And then after these few rapidly spoken directions, he sprang up to his cousin's room. The door was closed. Arthur gently tapped. No answer. He opened it softly, after a brief effort to control himself, and prepared for the worst. And it was well that he did so. For it was a heart-rending spectacle that met his eyes.

The room appeared full of shadows, misty and confused in the obscure light.

But as he entered farther, and the mist that clouded his eyes cleared away, he could see a form on the bed—a form pale and motionless, partly undressed, and lying outstretched apparently in the rigid stupor of death.

But a faint moaning betrayed that life was not extinct; as the blood streaks that came slowly, and faintly down the white cheeks from the temples also testified.

Arthur turned deadly faint as he gazed at his cousin, and his eyes dazzled so that he could scarcely distinguish the group surrounding the bed; but when the first shock had in some measure passed, he could distinguish the forms of two men—evidently a surgeon and his assistant—for the latter held a bowl and sponge, which the doctor was applying to the head.

The personal attendant of poor Oliver was supporting the arm—his teeth chattering, and his lips white with alarm as he did so.

In the background were two policemen, and one or two strangers, whose faces were unknown to Arthur, but who were looking at the wounded man with deep sympathy, and perhaps a little curiosity painted on their features.

It was a thrilling, terrible scene; and Arthur's steps shook, and his voice faltered, as he approached the bed, and asked the brief question:

"Is he alive?"

The surgeon looked up.

"Oh, Mr. Arthur, sir," said Oliver's attendant; "Mr. Oliver's cousin, sir."

The surgeon looked compassionately at him.

"Oh, yes; he is living—see, the blood flows, and that proves life, besides the moans. But it's an ugly case—an ugly case—I don't disguise. But we shall do our best, and he is young and strong."

"Send for any—for the best assistance in London!" exclaimed Arthur. "I will go myself! Who shall it be? For our family surgeon, and L—and B—?"

"Yes—I will have them here in less than an hour!" And before the somewhat disappointed man of medicine could speak, the impetuous young man had rushed from the room, and was flying down stairs at the rate of ten stairs at a jump.

But his progress was arrested by the erect form of a policeman.

"Beg pardon, sir, but as I am told that you are the

master of the house, sir, in the illness of the old gentleman, and the—accident of the one upstairs, sir, I want to say that we must search the house, I think we shall find him here, Mr. Danvers. We made a kind of haul, sir, of some of the crew, but one of them escaped, and we traced him here, and a very odd circumstance, as the wounded gentleman belongs here too, sir."

Arthur's impetuous blood was chafing and boiling under the delay.

"Yes, yes, do what you like; but let me go. Wait here till I return. You can keep a watch inside the house to prevent any escape, and I will not be long; I will help you myself, for there are ladies and invalids in the house, who must not be disturbed."

And scarcely waiting for a reply, he seized his hat from Reynolds, and rushed out in the storm.

The rain was falling pitiously. The lightning flashed at rapid intervals; the thunder roared with that instantaneous answer to its electric herald that showed how completely the storm was over the metropolis at the moment.

Arthur rushed along—unheeding all—even his complete drenching to the very skin, and the utter desolation of the streets through which he passed, did not seem to awaken him from the complete absorption in his one errand—the rapid aid that could alone save his cousin from a violent and sudden death.

Not a cab was to be seen in the street immediately round the square.

But as he went down—Street, he thought he could distinguish the sound of approaching wheels, and eagerly ran in that direction to secure the vehicle at any cost. But as it came in view of the dim, struggling gaslight, and he hailed the driver with a loud shout that was heard though the raging of the storm, a shake of the head, and the indistinct but intelligible "got a fare," brought another disappointment to his hopes.

But for a moment, that disappointment was lost in eager wonder. For a flash of lightning revealed the face of the tenant of the cab; and the young man stood for a moment in speechless astonishment, for in the face—all white, haggard, and muffled up as it was—he recognised, or he was grievously deceived, the features of his cousin Cecil.

"Cecil, Cecil," he shouted, "take me in—life and death are in the case."

But the man galloped on, as if he, too, felt that life and death hung on his speed; and in a moment, the vehicle was out of sight, and the very sounds died away in the distance.

An hour, or perhaps less, had elapsed.

Arthur had brought back two of the most eminent surgeons in London, and taken them up in breathless haste to the patient's room.

The apartment was very different now. The shaded light only shone on the figure of the surgeon seated near the body, with his fingers resting on the pulse of his patient, and glancing, with the help of the subdued light, at his white face and closed eyes. And on the other side, sitting in a chair, with her head bent down to the pillow, and with tearful eyes strained to discover the slightest change in the aspect of the patient, was the pale, slight figure of Evelyn Rivers.

There was a look of utter woe in the girl's face, and yet the mouth had that look of firmness and self-mastery that proved her fit to be trusted in the sick chamber.

She looked eagerly up as the gentlemen entered, and an exclamation of heartfelt thankfulness burst from her lips as she met Arthur's anxious eyes:

"Dear Arthur, I am so thankful you are come."

"Evelyn, dearest, come with me. 'This is no place for you,' he said, moving to lead her from the room. 'It is the place for a sister, Arthur, and I shall take that place,' was the reply.

But her voice faltered somewhat as she said the words.

The elder of the surgeons now interferred:

"My dear young lady, leave us for a little time. There will be plenty for you to do for the patient in after hours; but at present we must be left to see what the case really is. Go—both of you—you may trust him in our hands, and we will summon you when we want you. And you, Mr. Arthur, had better take off your wet clothes, or you will be under our hands also."

And Doctor H—nearly pushed the young cousins from the room.

"Go, Arthur, do as he said," Evelyn gasped. "Then, come back to me. They say strange men are in the house. You will send them away, will you not, dear Arthur?"

He looked at her in surprise. The look and tone were so imploring, so agonised. Could it be only her terror for Oliver that had so agitated her, or had she any knowledge of which he was ignorant.

But it was no time to discuss the point, when his own frame was shivering with distress and the chill that had penetrated to his very bones, and when Evelyn herself was white as her wrapper. So he quietly led her to Oliver's private sitting-room on the other side of the corridor, and telling her he would return instantly, he flew to his own apartment, and rapidly made the necessary change of attire.

In less than five minutes he was again at his cousin's side.

"Now, dear Evelyn," he said, "you shall tell me what you mean. I am going now to hear the account of poor Oliver's accident, and to know what the police are searching after; but, till then, I cannot interfere with them in any way, and after all, their presence is the least part of our trouble."

And a slight, very slight tinge of reproach mingled with the tones.

Evelyn shivered.

"Nay, Arthur, you know not now, you cannot tell what it is, what horror is in store for us. In pity, do as I beg you. Oliver would not refuse—dear, noble Oliver."

And a shower of tears rained down her face.

A pang shot through Arthur's heart. He scarcely knew why the words grated on his ears. Yet so it was.

"Oliver—dear, noble Oliver," uttered in such tones, brought a strange disquiet that he hated himself for feeling at such a moment, when that kind relative was lying in the very jaws of death.

"Evelyn, Oliver would do right, whatever be-tided," he said, gently; "and I must do my duty to him and to justice. Let me go but for a few minutes, and I will do my utmost to meet your wishes. But time passes, and—and—I scarcely can answer for myself if Oliver died. I would go to the world's end to avenge his death."

And the young man's teeth met with a force that ground and grated in its hard purpose.

The girl shrank back, and cowered down on the couch.

"At least, promise me that you will do nothing—nothing, till you tell me," she said, shivering.

"Evelyn, dear, this work has been too much for you," he said, tenderly. "You are scarcely mistress of yourself. Trust me; I will do all that is most in accordance with your comfort and wishes. But I fear that it is necessary to search the house, and that will at once free us from their presence."

The agony vanished from the girl's eyes, the great, sharp agony that had glittered there so painfully.

"As you will," she said, "but come back, please come back."

"I will, I will, in a few moments," he said, "but try and be calm while I am away."

And he rushed from the room, and went to the dining-parlour, where the inspector of police awaited him.

A grave, respectful, yet decided-looking man was the inspector. A man who had been a long time in the force, and who was well-accustomed to every kind of crime and of law, of romance and mystery.

He had waited quietly and patiently for the long-desired return of the young man. No one would have imagined that he had been engaged in an undertaking of importance, on which his own reputation mainly depended, and that for the last hour he had been quietly waiting, with his arrangements fully made and his mind in suspense, to determine the result of the night's work.

His face was stolid and composed, though perfectly respectful in its expression, and his attitude the curious mixture of soldier-like bearing and official reticence, which marks the demeanour of the superior among our police force.

Arthur motioned him to a seat.

"Perhaps you will kindly give me your idea of what has taken place to-night," he said, "and the cause of my cousin's injuries. He went this evening on some hidden business, which he had not leisure then to explain and this is the first terrible intimation of its dangerous character. Where was he found, and how came the injuries he has received?"

Arthur spoke with a calm reticence that he was far from feeling, but he had no taste for lowering his manhood before the experienced gaze of the inspector, and it was scarcely to an official of police that he would have exhibited the sorrow that shook him to the heart's core.

The official replied with a formal respect, that is characteristic of the official mind.

"Well, sir, it is a very painful, and, I may say, a mysterious business. For, though we find a great many of these sort of things in our way of business, it's not often that such an affair comes before us as we had to-night; but, though I am not quite sure that I am right in betraying 'information,' sir, still, as you have so much to do with it, I can hardly help telling you what happened. But I must beg to have the house searched before any-

thing else, for time enough has been lost already; and I might get into trouble for not doing my duty even now, sir."

The request was decidedly too reasonable to be refused, and Arthur rang at once for the butler to conduct the policemen over the house, so far as the general rooms and the kitchen offices were concerned.

"I will, myself, accompany you to the more private apartments," he said, "for I should not like any shock to be given to my father, or the ladies of the family."

The inspector bowed respectfully, and left the room.

It seemed a long time ere they returned, and Arthur's became impatient. He was to eager to hear the particulars of Oliver's mysterious accident, and the causes that had brought about all its accompaniments of crime and trouble, and for the moment, it seemed to absorb his mind, to the exclusion of the yet more vital question of life or death.

But Arthur was a man—not a woman, who would have been content to let the whole proof of guilt and the offender escape justice—so that the victim might be saved from the fate intended for him.

(To be continued.)

THE GREEK PIRATE.

A SEA SKETCH.

FOR the following sketch, the reader is not indebted to the writer's imagination. The incidents herein related are but a few among tens of thousands equally thrilling, which are connected with the gross injuries and final downfall of the once noble Greeks. Every tottering wall and prostrate column speaks to the beholder some tale of wrong, and even the dark and dismal streets of the once proud Athens might, by their silent story of woe, draw tears from other hearts than those of Greece.

It was just at dusk, many years ago, after the iron heel of the turbaned Turk had trodden down the liberties of Greece, that a young man made his way down from the city of Athens, leaving Piræus to the right, towards the sea-coast. He was not more than five-and-twenty years of age, stoutly built, and wearing that expression of countenance and manner of conduct which, at a single glance, betrays the determined, resolute man. Just outside of the entrance to Port Lion, about half-a-mile from the stone pedestal upon which used to stand the large marble lion from which the port took its name, lay a small boat in which were two men, and towards this spot the above-mentioned individual took his way.

"Where is the brig, Matho?" asked the newcomer, as he laid his hand upon the bows of the boat and pushed her off from the land, after which he leaped on board.

"She is just off the cape, nearly fifteen miles from here," replied the elder of the two boatmen. "But tell me, Parthenius, are you determined to go on board to-night?"

"To-night?" repeated Parthenius, while a sudden flash shot from his dark eye. "Yes; and ere it be light again, my vessel shall have passed through the Siliots."

"What has happened, my dear captain, that should thus change your plans? I thought you were to sail southward?"

For a moment the young captain gazed towards the harbour, and then slowly raising his finger, he said, almost in a whisper—but in a whisper so deep that the embryo hurricane roared in its meaning tones:

"Do you see where those spars rear their tapering points above the hill?"

"Yes."

"That is the Turkish vessel. The last remnant of the mountain band that sought liberty among the rocks now lay in the hold of yonder ship; and among them is a white-haired old man who is to be sacrificed because he has fought for Greece. That man is my father; but as sure as there is a heaven, he shall not be delivered up to his death thus. To-morrow morning the Turk sail for the Marmora, but, by the powers of Olympus, she shall never cut its dark waters with a Greek prisoner on board. Azotus!"

"Sir!" returned the younger of the boatmen who was thus designated.

"Step the mast and loosen the furling-line. And you, Matho, stand by to shove her head round."

As Parthenius spoke, he seated himself at the helm of the boat, and in a few moments more her broad sail caught the breeze.

A few words will explain all that the reader need understand up to this time.

When the tyrant first overran the fertile plains of Attica, old Parthenius gathered several hundred of his countrymen together among the mountains, and there they determined to defend themselves and their daughters. The younger Parthenius had also ga-

thered together a band of choice spirits, but the sea was chosen as the theatre of his actions; and as Greece was now ruled by the Turkish power, our youthful hero was of course held in the light of a pirate.

No other vessels suffered at his hands save those of the Turk; but among them his ravages had been so extensive that every seaport along the coast rang with the tale of his deeds. The son was still at liberty, but the gray-haired sire was a prisoner, and the headsmen's stained scimitar awaited his arrival at Constantinople, whither he was to be sent to meet his doom.

The moon was just peeping up over the island-dotted bosom of the Archipelago, as the light quise of Parthenius shot from the land, and with a moderate, but fair wind, she made her way towards Cape Colonna. It was near midnight when the boat rounded to alongside the brig, which lay at a single anchor just off at Keratia, and as soon as the young captain had gained the vessel's deck, he ordered the anchor to be hove up, and sail made as soon as possible.

"Marco," said he, to his first officer, who had remained in charge of the brig, "I would have our brig within the Straits of Silota before it is daylight, for I would lay off Cape Doro in the morning."

"Silota!" returned the officer, in astonishment. "I thought you were bound for Milo."

"Not yet," said Parthenius. "Do you know the Isbar?"

"Do you mean the Turkish ship that lies in Port Lion?"

"The same."

"I know her to be a stout ship."

"Well, she shall be mine; or, at least, she shall be within my power."

"Within your power!" iterated Marco, in utter amazement. "Why, she has, at least, a hundred and fifty men, besides an armament three times as heavy as ours."

"Yes, she has a hundred and fifty men," exclaimed the Greek captain in a tone of bitterness; "but they fight for the paltry coppers that fall from the hand of the proud Turk, while we—we, Marco, fight for our homes—for the memory of kindred that have perished, ties of affection that have been snapped in sunder, and for the bitter wrongs that have been heaped upon our countrymen. In the hold of the Isbar goes my old father to his death; his noble band have been all shot down like beasts, or taken prisoners, and the cruel Turk thinks he has conquered. But he has yet to pass through my hands, and may his prophet have mercy on him, for I will walk over the corpses of them all if they stand between me and my father."

At that moment a voice from forward announced that the anchor was apeak, and Marco turned to see after the loosening of the top-sails. He knew that his captain never used idle speech, and he knew also that what he had determined upon was sure to be carried into execution; but how the Greek brig, with only fifty men, was to capture the heavy Turk, he failed to comprehend. Of one thing, however, he was certain—not a Greek that trod the deck of the vessel would flinch if Parthenius bade them go on.

As the brig cleared the break of the land, the breeze came fresh and strong; and when the sun rose on the next morning, she had rounded Cape Doro, and her main-top-sail was laid to the mast. High above the shoal water in which the Greek had laid to, towered a projecting cliff of bare rock, the summit of which commanded a full view of the broad sheet of water between Eubœa and Andros; and upon this eminence a sharp look-out was kept during the greater part of the day. But along towards night, the white top-gallant sails of a heavy ship were made out away to the southward, and having become assured that the Turk was coming up through the straits, Parthenius called the look-out down from his station, and got his vessel once more under way. The wind was fresh from the northward and westward, and the brig, taking it a few points free, stood off towards the coast of Scio. As the night darkened into a state of almost sable gloom, with hardly a star to beguile the gaze of the mariner, Parthenius called his men all aft, and thus addressed them:

"My brave comrades, you all know, of course, the object of this cruise, for to Matho and Azotus, and to my brave Marco I have already revealed it. Within the next six hours the proud Turk will have cleared the Cape, and without trouble I can cross his track, for I know the exact course he will steer. You know that some of our kindred lie chained upon his deck; and now, my men—hearties of Sparta and of Attica—I will lay you alongside of the Isbar; my foot shall be the first to touch the tyrant's deck. Will you follow me?"

There was no wild shout went up from that deck, nor was there any sudden burst of enthusiasm; but

fifty bright swords flashed in the rays of the deck lantern, fifty knees were bended, and fifty lips gave to the air an oath that their countrymen should be free.

Parthenius stepped back with a light tread, and seizing the wheel in his own grasp, he put the helm up and gave orders for wearing around upon the opposite course. The brig was upon the exact course of the ship, and the young captain was confident that if he stood back in his own wake, he could not fail of coming in contact with her. The wind still continued fresh, nor had it altered from its point at nightfall, and so taking it upon the quarter, the gallant brig started back towards Cape Doro. Until after midnight the Greek kept on without interruption. The deck lantern had been extinguished, the lighter sails taken in, and over a comparatively smooth sea she seemed to creep rather than to sail, so stealthily and ghost-like were her movements. Parthenius had given the helm to Matho, and with his night-glass he had stationed himself upon the end of the bowsprit.

It lacked some minutes of one o'clock when he came hastily upon the deck and ordered the top-sails to be clewed up and the yards to be eased carefully down to the caps. The Turk was directly ahead, and in fifteen minutes the meeting must take place. The brig had nothing set but the fore and main stay-sails, and Parthenius rightly concluded that he should not be noticed till he was too near for the ship to avoid his purpose.

"Arm! arm! everyone of you!" said the Greek commander, as the tall spars of the Turk could now be clearly traced against an opening in the southern sky. "Arm to the teeth, and press forward to the larboard bow. Be ready for the leap, and remember that you strike for your kindred, for your God, and for Greece! You, Azotus, look well to the grapplings; see that they are surely thrown. Let her come up—Luff! Luff!"

Matho put down the helm, and the brig, which had been gradually falling to leeward, now came up towards the looming bows of the approaching ship; and not until she was within a cable's length did the Turk discover the proximity of the stranger.

"Hallo, there!" shouted the officer of the Isbar, not yet able to discover the character or size of the brig. "Keep away! up with your helm! By the Prophet, the fellow 'll be afoul of us." Then turning to his own helmsman, he exclaimed, "Down with the helm! Down with it, quick! Let go the jib and fore-stay-sail sheets. By the power of Allah, the fool will be sunk."

The Turk had taken the course which, of all others, the Greeks could most have wished; for as the heavy ship came up into the wind she lost her head-way, and in a moment more the bows of the brig grated beneath her fore-chains. Like dark spirits from the deep blue waters came the avenging Greeks, with the towering form of Parthenius at their head; they sprang upon the tyrant's deck, and ere the turbaned Moslems could collect their scattered senses, a dozen of them had fallen beneath the retributive strokes of the strange invaders.

"Strike for Greece; for Parthenius and Liberty!" shouted Marco, as he cut his way through the half-frantic Turks.

"The Greek Pirate!" cried the officers of the ship, as they heard that dreaded name—"then may Allah protect us."

When the Greeks first boarded, one half of the Isbar's crew were below in their hammocks, but they soon began to crowd upon deck; they came unarmed, ignorant of what was going on, and most of them came only to their death.

So unexpected, so sudden had been the attack, that ere the Turks could arm themselves, the Greeks had gained the advantage, and still pressing on, they cut down all that opposed them, until Parthenius stood upon the quarter-deck. For a moment he dropped the point of his sword and gazed about him. On every side gleamed the sword and scimeter, and head after head dropped and fell.

At length a sharp, shrill cry arose from a number of Turkish officers who had crowded together upon the opposite side of the deck from where stood the Greek lion, and the call for mercy—for quarter—arose above the clash of the death-seeking steel. A proud look of triumph gleamed upon the Greek commander's face as he heard that cry, and waving his sword high above his head, he shouted:

"Hold! Back, Greeks—back! Strike not another blow except in defence."

And striding forward to where the battle raged hottest, he struck down the uplifted weapons, and bade the men stand back.

In three minutes every sword hung dripping by its owner's side; and striding aft, to where stood the officers of the Turk, Parthenius shouted:

"Now, proud Turk, lead forth your prisoners. Bring up that gray-haired old man whom you have

doomed to the traitor's death; and mark me, if harm hath been done to but a single hair of his head, every Moslem heart that now beats upon your decks shall send forth its blood in atonement."

With trembling limbs the Turks went to fulfil this mandate, and ere many minutes had elapsed, twelve prisoners stood unshackled upon the quarter-deck. With a heart leaping proudly in its triumph and joy, Parthenius sprang forward and clasped his aged parent to his bosom.

"God bless you, my noble son," murmured the old man, as the tears of joy rolled down his furrowed cheeks.

The Greeks took up the cry of blessing, and like the clarion's peal rang their shouts of "Parthenius and liberty!" over the dark sea.

The released prisoners were conveyed to the brig, and as Parthenius was about to step over the side to his own vessel, he turned to the Turkish commander and said:

"Go, thou infidel tyrant—go to your proud master, and tell him that Parthenius scorned to crush the poor viper that stung him! Tell him that the Greek scorns to glut his revenge on those who fight as slaves, at the beck of a still more slavish master; and tell him, too, that there be some Greeks who never will be slaves."

Six only of the brig's crew had fallen. Their bodies were removed to their own vessel, and found their rest beneath the green sward of their native land, while the dark waters of the Archipelago received threescore of the fallen Moslems.

Back from Athens, towards the small town of Marathano, where a quiet valley reposes between two gently sloping hills, there are a number of graves. One of them, which raises its marble slab a few rods up on the northern slope, bears the simple name of Parthenius. The goatherds who tend their flocks upon the neighbouring hills protect that slab from harm, and a peculiar light sparkles in their eyes as they tell over the deeds of him whose ashes repose beneath it—who was once so dreaded by the Turk, and who was denounced by the Moslems as "The Greek Pirate." S. C. J.

THE MURDERS IN ABYSSINIA.—Information has been received which at last sets all doubt at rest respecting the sad fate of Mr. and Mrs. Powell and party. Mr. Walter Powell, M.P., a brother of the deceased gentleman, has just returned from Alexandria, where he had gone to deliver a firman which he succeeded in obtaining from the Viceroy of Egypt, and which directed a strong military escort to be provided for Mr. Henry Powell and Mr. Jenkins who have gone in search. Mr. Walter Powell brings intelligence, which is believed to be substantially authentic, that Mr. Powell and party were attacked and massacred by the Tekah tribe, and not by the Bezan tribe as first reported. The Bezans afterwards came upon the murderers, and compelled them not only to relinquish the booty, but to deliver up the bodies; and the Bezans conveyed the bodies to the Swedish missionaries, by whom they were buried. No doubt is entertained of the correctness of this statement, and there is every probability that Mr. Henry Powell and Mr. Jenkins will succeed in bringing home the remains of their relatives.

SUNSTROKE.—A deplorable case of sunstroke occurred at Belton Park, near Grantham, July 22nd. On that day the Volunteers from the neighbouring counties assembled for inspection by Colonel Wombwell. The Robin Hoods, from Nottingham, are said to have excelled the soldiers of the Line in the drill, but one of the captains had to be carried off the field, and he has not yet fully recovered from the effects of the heat. Before the whole body of volunteers marched to the park, which is situated within two miles of the railway station, the bandmaster of the March Rifle Corps fell and immediately expired. It is also understood that another death has happened, and from 50 to 60 men altogether suffered from the heat and were carried to hospitals provided, where, under careful medical attendance, they recovered. Such an occurrence as this should suggest to the authorities the propriety of either drilling their men in seasonable weather, or providing them with sufficient protection from the heat. In this case, several thousand men had a march of two miles to the review ground, and a very heavy drill when they reached the park. We do not wonder at these cases of sunstroke, but think a cap similar to those used by our soldiers who serve in tropical climates should be adopted. We hear with pleasure that Captain Calthrop, in command of one of the divisions, although so faint that he was unable to command, still declined to leave the ranks. He is a man advanced in years but held firm to his duty. Captain Selby suffered in a similar manner, but managed, with the aid of stimulants, to go through the evolutions with his men.



[A DAFFLED TIGER.]

FAIRLEIGH;

OR, THE BANKER'S SECRET.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Mrs. DALVANE proceeded, and gave an account of the capture of the burglar by Walter, which I gave to the reader in a previous chapter.

As she finished, Rowe grasped Walter's hand, and said, with sincerity:

"Walter, you are a brave fellow! You have my gratitude."

Many encomiums were passed by all present upon the courage displayed by Walter, and then, by universal request, Mrs. Dalvane began her story thus:

"In as brief a manner as possible, I will recall the events of the dark, gloomy years of my life; for to dwell upon them while we are so happy, seems like shrouding light with darkness. When the news came which nearly drove my reason from its throne, my babe was yet unborn. For the sake of my child, I endeavoured to repress the emotions that surged like mighty waters over my soul, drowning my joy, and casting hope far up the beach of despair. Let me pass quickly over sixteen months of unutterable, heart-crushing, spirit-destroying anguish. I lived only for my child, who was a smiling cherub, and seemed like an angel sent from heaven to cheer and comfort me in my great grief. Then I conceived the idea of leaving my own country, and taking up my abode where none should know me, and where I could be secure from any observations upon my life's sorrow."

"Friends, who during my trouble had been most kind, and who tried to dissuade me from going, when they found I was bent upon it, withdrew their objections, and helped me as much as was in their power to prepare for my journey. Fortunately, I became acquainted with an Italian Count and his wife. The lady was charmed with my child, and asked me if I would stay with her merely for the purpose of having my infant within her sight. I thought this a strange request, but upon the importunities of her husband, who would deny his young and beautiful wife nothing, I was made a companion of the countess. My time was all my own, and everything that heart could wish at my command; and although thankful for these blessings, yet I was miserable."

"After a long, though quiet journey, we arrived at the castle in sunny-skied Italy, where life seemed to grow a little more pleasant. Eight years I passed with the countess, whom I grew very fond of, and

she, I think, reciprocated the attachment, while her love for my boy, instead of diminishing, increased. It was at this time that the countess took sick, and after a short illness died. On her death-bed she conjured her husband, by the love he bore her, to remember and protect me. I felt now that I was alone, all, all alone; the dear friend who had shielded me thus far, was no more. Her husband felt his loss very keenly, indeed it changed him to a hard, cold, repulsive man, going about his castle like a spectre, neither lifting his eyes nor speaking."

"I was now fully aware that it was no longer advisable or proper for me to remain under his roof. Upon my departure he made me a present of money enough to last us two or three years. Where to go I did not know, but at last determined on Marseilles in France."

"On my way through Florence in Italy, I met a nobleman who had visited at Count Logrerere's. He instantly recognised me, and inquired if I wanted a situation to teach English in a good family. Here was another opportunity, and I seized it with avidity."

"In a few days I was established in a patrician family, with the duties of teaching two young ladies in English, and as the parents had no objection, I taught Walter at the same time. There I passed six years more of life, and Walter was nearly fifteen years of age. His education was good, for I had had the best advantages, and imparted my knowledge to him. At this time he showed a decided tendency to painting. He had drawn with crayon and pencil, as most boys do at his age, but I never looked upon it as any benefit to him or ever imagined that his inclination was bent in that direction. I was somewhat surprised, then, when he told me that Signor Fatuni, a celebrated artist, had taken notice of his sketches, and asked him if he would like to become a painter. Walter was very enthusiastic, and entered the studio of Signor Fatuni with high hopes."

His father now interrupted, and exclaimed: "My son an artist! My dear boy, I am very glad. It was my chief passion, but circumstances forbade my undertaking it."

"You ought—"

"Hush, Clarence!" whispered Walter, giving him a gentle admonition with his elbow.

Then turning, he said: "Please proceed, mother."

And Mrs. Dalvane continued: "This occurred only a few weeks before the six years previously alluded to drew to a close. My services were no longer needed, and renting three

rooms, Walter and I had a home of our own, and lived together as contentedly as could be expected, with that grief ranking at my heart. He was ever kind, and affectionate to a fault, and obedient—" "Thank Heaven for that!" murmured Warren Ormsby.

Mrs. Dalvane smiled from her husband to her son, and resumed:

"He often looked at my sad face, and wondered. I saw that it troubled him. Once he asked in regard to his father. It seemed then that my heart would break; for a moment I could not reply; then I turned my head away, and told him that he was dead. When I looked again he was standing meditative, doubting, and silent."

"One year passed away, and Walter was progressing finely; then I began to have hopes of his success. He was full of ardour, and I saw that if application could develop the genius that Signor Fatuni told him he possessed, that sometime he would make an artist. Another six months of existence, not life, for the grim spectre of the past haunted me like a vengeful spirit—and a cloud burst over us. Walter rushed home to me, his face pale, the tears trembling upon his eyelashes, and told me that Signor Fatuni had told him that he could stay with him no longer, and that he had better leave Florence."

"Let me pass over the grief that this produced. Suffice it to say that we were once more driven away, pursued as it were by an evil genius, and in fact it was so, for on the way I met Luke Holden face to face. With all haste and trembling, I avoided him."

"After many days of hard travel we arrived at Paris. My money became short, and I looked forward to the future with terrible apprehension. Walter at once understood the position of affairs, and with a calculation which might have done credit to one of matured years, proposed that I should learn to make lace, while he would paint pictures and retail them about the streets. Both plans were carried into effect, and it served to give us quite a comfortable living. We were not destined, however, to remain in peace but a short time. One day while sitting in my little attic, the door opened, and the evil face of Luke Holden appeared. You remember my husband, how he persecuted me before we were married, and for which you gave him such a whipping. I don't think he ever forgot that. As I saw him I nearly fainted; I was alone, and in not a very nice house, or part of the city. He advanced, seated himself, and at once began talking about how cruelly I had treated him, and asked me to marry

him. I recoiled with loathing. I saw that he had been drinking, and I wished to conciliate him as much as possible, for I feared him. He construed my amicable manner into consent, and came towards me. I ran across the room, he followed, and clasped me in his arms. I felt as if I were in the coils of a serpent; I struggled with my whole strength, but all to no purpose."

Warren trembled with rage when he heard these words, and his breath came quick and fast, and impatiently he awaited her next words.

"He held me and I could not move, while his detested lips were pressed to my cheeks. At that moment I heard a step upon the stairs, then in the room, then a cry of rage followed by a terrible oath,—the first one that ever passed Walter's lips—and like a vulture he sprang upon Holden's shoulders, tore his hair, and pounded him until he was obliged to release me."

"Bless my boy, his mother's only and noble protector!" exclaimed his father, clasping his son to his breast in a transport of joy.

Mrs. Dalvane paused a moment, drank a glass of water and continued:

"Fiercely the enraged man turned towards my boy; then my heart seemed to jump into my throat, I trembled for his safety, I sought to go between them, but Walter tore open his jacket, and drew therefrom a shining stiletto. 'Advance one step,' he cried, his eyes flashing, 'and this shall pierce your worthless heart.' I was surprised at this, aye, and my love for my brave boy grew stronger, if possible. Holden stood a moment, and then deeply muttering turned and left the house."

"I sank into a chair from sheer exhaustion, it had had a weakening effect upon my already strained nerves. Walter told me that he had sold all his pictures and received double price for two, and that seeing the stiletto he had purchased it. In that I saw the finger of providence—it saved me."

"Fearing that Holden would again persecute me, I went to New Zealand. I had been there a short time and had not seen him. The sale of Walter's pictures, which at first had been so rapid, from its novelty, I presume, now began to decrease, and our affairs again wore a gloomy aspect, which was enhanced by my landlord's telling me, very peremptorily, that he would not have a murderer's wife and child in his house. For an instant those cruel words almost stopped the pulsations of my heart. I stood gazing at him with hardly the power to move; then, with an aching heart and wildly-throbbing head, I left his presence."

How I thanked heaven, as I walked the streets of Auckland, the tears streaming from my eyes, that Walter had not heard those awful words. But landlords eyed me as though I were a criminal, and when I stated to them my object, they either cast some slurring reply at me, or turned unconcernedly away in silence. I retraced my steps towards my rooms, which I could occupy but two days longer, and then I had no shelter—no home. With a sickening sensation I began to pack what few articles I had, for once more I must fly from the wrath which pursued me. Is there a country in the world, I cried, that will give me rest, for it seemed as if I was to be driven ruthlessly about, and by who? Luke Holden! Yes, I knew it was he that caused me this trouble."

"I had money enough to keep us alive a few weeks. What I should do when that was gone I knew not, but trusted in heaven. I set about procuring apartments. For strangers in a strange city this was no easy task, and three or four days had passed by, and our stock of money was being depleted by the high price of living at a hotel, when Walter, who had worked assiduously to help me, heard of some apartments, and we hired them, though without knowledge of where the rent for the ensuing month was coming from. This difficulty, however, was happily avoided by my procuring shirts and other articles to make, and for a year we managed to keep above want."

"Then ill fortune again assailed us. My health was very poor, and at last I became ill, and for several months almost helpless. During this time Walter worked at everything by which he could get money to procure me medical attendance and delicacies, while he lived on the coarsest of fare, and worked early and late. He, with his talents, obliged to do such work! I think it hurt me more than my illness. But let me not recall my pain, or shock you with any farther description of our misery and poverty at that time. Suffice it to say that we survived it, although it cost me many a pang when I gazed at Walter's thin, though hopeful features. Dear child, he cheered his mother when her heart was heavy and life seemed a blight."

"Three years passed away. During that time we were sometimes upon the wave of comparative comfort, and at other times in the slough of despair. At

the end of the three years and six months, we experienced our worst condition. Holden had again sought us out, and sent his emissaries to blast us, if possible. We were turned out of doors, all that we had was taken from us, and with hunger gnawing at our vitals, and not a shilling in our possession, hand in hand, with heavy hearts and despairing minds, we stood alone."

Walter Ormsby groaned.

Mr. Dalvane continued:

"Then as manna came from heaven, so came relief to us. A letter was sent to our former lodgings from Count Logrenerre, with two hundred pounds, ten of which was distrained by the landlord for rent. With the rest we procured a few necessary articles, and after a few weeks' deliberation, I concluded to return to my native land, with a hope that the persecution, which had so relentlessly followed us, would cease. To save money, we took passage in the steerage, and at the opening of the summer arrived in the Haidee."

"In the Haidee!" exclaimed Charles and Clarence simultaneously, and in tones of surprise.

"Yes, after an absence of nineteen years. But why so earnest your question?"

"Clarence and myself were upon the same vessel, and listened to the story of an old sailor, which we now find to be identical with the cause of our troubles."

Mrs. Dalvane bowed, and continued:

"I have but a few words to add. I had thought of coming to see you, Edgar, but the fact that Walter would know the cause of my grief, taken with another circumstance which I had omitted to mention, deterred me. While at the hotel, I received a letter. I was much surprised, as it bore no stamp, and I wondered who knew of my arrival. The contents served to increase my sorrow, for it told me that you, Edgar, had conspired against your brother, and that you urged him to commit the foul deed. I was in doubt: I could not believe it, yet it left an impression upon my mind. You can now see, Walter, why I trembled at the name of Edgar Ormsby, and wished to go where I should never hear it. There, my story is ended."

"Another artful scheme to cause you suffering, and separate you from those who loved you," remarked Edgar.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Dalvane. "But, now, light has dispelled those shades of doubt."

"Little you thought, Charles," observed Clarence, referring to his friend's former remarks, "that you were the child whom the old sailor dwelt upon with so much pathos."

"Ah, how well is it that I did not," answered Rowe, "else I should have suffered more than I have."

"Oh, Charles," whispered Florence, "during the time that you have been cheering me, you, too, have had your own grief, and so dreadful. Oh, how blind I was that I did not perceive it."

"No, no, darling, think not of it. I take delight in the joy of you and yours."

Florence replied not, but to her this unselfish and forbearing nature was made more plainly apparent, and with it came new appreciation and new love.

"Now, I believe there is only one revelation," said Warren Ormsby, "and that is the confession of Luke Holden."

"Oh, let us hear that by all means," said Clarence, "and then we will think no more of it, but devote our thoughts to the present. But first, let me ask you, uncle, if they know who you really are at the department?"

"They do not, nor even Saunders. I desired to know how the world would speak of me now the real murderer is captured. But now the confession," and he drew the manuscript from his pocket and began:

"At last I am caught; now I've got to swing, and I might as well 'push.' The greatest of my crimes I will tell you, but I wouldn't, if I could, do the one that suffered any good; but it can't, for he is dead."

"The Ormsby family I have cause to hate. Even our fathers were rivals in politics, and out of that grew a feud which trivial things served to add to, until my father nourished a bitter and perfect hatred of the name, which I inherited. In my early life, I attended the same school with Edgar; we became rivals in scholarship, and he distanced me; before that I was foremost in my class. A trifle, as you may deem this, yet it was the foundation of a life of crime; little things make up this world. Provoked at this, I picked a quarrel with him, and he whipped me soundly, something no other boy of my own age had been able to do. This roused the slumbering demon in my childish breast, and I vowed I would have revenge. I kept it constantly in my mind, until it became an object of my life. As yet, I wished for more cause, to justify myself in more vigorous measures. Years flew on, and that cause was forthcoming. I happened to take up my abode in the

same town with Warren Ormsby, Edgar's younger brother. About that time I became acquainted with and loved a beautiful woman. She repulsed me; I pressed my suit and she rejected me. Then it was, I learned that she loved Warren Ormsby. Rage took possession of me; the greatest object of my life, my love had been turned aside, and an Ormsby—curse the name—had been the cause of it."

"Again I called upon her, and accused her of loving him; she admitted it. I think for the moment—when I saw my hopes dashed so ruthlessly—that I was crazy. I believe I rushed towards her with the purpose of taking her away with me. The next I know, I was lying in a corner, and Warren Ormsby stood over me triumphant. I arose and clutched him, but he was too strong for me, and gave me a terrible beating. In my heart I swore that for every blow he struck me, him and his should suffer untold anguish. That event changed the current of my life; hitherto, I had not committed any crime."

"I went to London, and obtained a clerkship in a large house. While there I formed the acquaintance of a man who was a sworn enemy to Hugh de Argyll. Why, he would not tell me, but did tell me that he loved his young wife. We mingled our hatred together, sought sympathy from each other, and concocted a plot to be put into execution when it would seem to strike out for us our mutual revenge upon their separate objects."

"Nine months had passed, and I went to the town in which Warren Ormsby lived. I lurked around his house, and heard him tell his wife of his contemplated journey. I now saw my way clear, and returning to London, I hired some ruffians at the appointed time, and put him into a carriage which we had ready."

"The night came, and my friends and myself entered the house by false keys. I took the woman from her bed, while my accomplice held ether to her husband's nostrils."

Rowe groaned in spirit as these words fell upon his ear.

Warren Ormsby continued:

"I then carried her out and put her into the carriage. When I returned, Hugh de Argyll's throat was cut from ear to ear. Ormsby had been followed from the station, and came directly that way, thereby saving the men the trouble of using force before he got there. He was safely put into the carriage, taken to Liverpool and put on board of a steamer, along with my accomplice and de Argyll's young wife."

"Thank Heaven, that absolves my mother from guilt!" ejaculated the young doctor.

"While on the voyage a French ship was hailed, and they, along with myself, were transferred to the vessel and taken to France. There I left them, and never heard of either again. After fourteen years' absence I returned to my native land. I had seen Mrs. Warren Ormsby in Paris, and my love again made itself known. I clasped her to my breast, when her boy darted into the room, and nearly tore my scalp from my head. I threw him off my back, but he made at me with a knife, and partly from fear, and partly from love for his mother, I left him unmolested, but I paid them back."

"I fell in now with a curious personage, an imp I should call him, and indeed he was. I had grown reckless, more so than ever, and wished to wreak my vengeance upon Edgar, for I had not forgotten the whipping he gave me in my boyish days. To make a long story short, I took the imp for a companion, and joined a gang of villains of which he was chief. A short time after this I disguised myself and visited Edgar, telling him a cock-and-bull story about Warren, which he believed, and forked over a thousand pounds. After this the imp visited him, and gulled a thousand pounds out of him, for keeping Warren from the grasp of the law as we told him. This was carried on for five years, and, at last, began to be an old story. The money did not satisfy my feelings of revenge. About this time we learned that Mrs. Ormsby had returned to England. I caused a letter to be sent to her at Springfield, which would keep her away from Edgar, and I did not think she could support herself. We caused her life to be made miserable—we tried to kill her by starvation and fire, but everything failed. Another fact we ascertained, that a person calling himself Charles Rowe, was the son of Hugh de Argyll: him we tried to kill both in London and Liverpool, and substitute a member of our branch gang in his place. Meanwhile we had hatched up a plot to convict Edgar as an accessory before the fact; our evidence was a well-manufactured lie; we had forged letters purporting to have been written by Edgar to his brother; and we had men drilled—nice-looking men, who would talk well in court—in conversations which we should allege to have taken place between the two prior to the event. If

that had succeeded, my revenge would have been complete; but it didn't, and 'twas your fault, you minion—you law hound—you accursed detective! But never mind, Warren is dead—burnt to death—or cat up in Africa, ha, ha! that is one consolation. When I am hung I shall go to—but I don't care; I've made misery enough for the Ormsby family."

"With these terrible and unrepentant words," remarked Warren Ormsby, "the confession closes." "And he imagined, uncle, that you were dead," said Floss. "Shall you let him know who you are?"

"I shall be obliged to at the trial, my dear child; whether I shall reveal myself to him before, I have not yet decided."

"This confession," said Edgar, gravely, "only shows us what a little thing, nourished and warmed in one's bosom, can become the ruling passion of life, and what an awful end it may lead to."

"Too true," replied his wife. Then turning to Walter, she said: "Have you any paintings at the hotel? I wish to see some of your work very much."

Before Walter could reply, Clarence remarked: "I have a painting upstairs, mother, which I should like to show you; and perhaps Walter would like to see it, for it is a great work of art."

"Indeed, I should," rejoined Walter, innocently. Clarence left the room, and in a few moments returned with a large picture, covered. Placing it where the light was good, he said:

"Floss, look at this!"

And he withdrew the cloth. "Oh, Clarence! Clarence!" ejaculated Mrs. Ormsby. "That is perfect! It is my child transferred to canvas!"

"The picture almost seems to breathe," said Edgar.

"But how is this—you have sat for no picture, my daughter?"

"I know I have not, papa, and that is the strangest part of it."

All expressed their approbation in high terms, while Walter kept his head turned away, and was very busy examining a statuette, so that his expression could not be seen.

"Now, Clarence," continued his father, much interested, "will you tell me how that was painted without the presence of the original?"

"It was painted from an impression left on the artist's mind by a dream!"

"Impossible!"

"Indeed? Walter, come here and tell father your dream, and how you painted that picture."

Warren Ormsby leaped from his chair. Parental pride, love, and incredulity sat intermingled upon his features, and advancing he caught Walter to his breast, murmuring:

"My dear child, what a prize I possess in you."

Astonishment reigned. Could it be possible that a young man not yet twenty could paint such a picture as that? It was true, however incredible it might seem, and Walter Ormsby at once became the hero of the hour. He was flooded with praise, and weary of the subject, and wishing to change it, he asked Florence to sing.

Mr. Rowe at once added his request, and for the first time since the cloud of sorrow had lowered, Florence seated herself at the piano. For a moment the magnificent instrument gave out rich, delicious strains under the magic touch of her lily fingers, and accompanying it came sweet sounds that arose and filled the room with their mellow cadence, until all within the charmed circle of her voice were enthralled, as if bound in an elysium of delight.

The evening passed away in happiness, and the great house was still. What would the morrow bring forth?

CHAPTER LXVIII

AND now happiness reigned in the Ormsby mansion, where lately had been all gloom and darkness. Under the general influence of joy, which is the best medicine for those who are mentally ill, Mrs. Ormsby seemed to cast aside all sickness and depression, and return to her natural self again. To all of them the events of the last day seemed like a dream, and they only believed in its reality by the living proof around them.

Early in the morning Walter Ormsby proceeded to his office, where he found jolly Saunders, who welcomed him in his usual cordial manner.

Clarence entered the drawing-room where all were seated, and taking a paper from his pocket, sat down and began to read aloud. It contained an eulogistic account of the capture of the robbers, and then referred to the arrest of Edgar Ormsby. It characterised it as gross, unjust, and a libel upon one of our wealthiest, most moral and exemplary citizens. It spoke farther of the slander preceding the arrest,

and wondered how an intelligent community, knowing as they did the domestic business and social position of the accused, could for one instant believe such a vile story. In this strain it continued, often referring to Mr. Edgar Ormsby, and speaking in the highest terms of him, and hoping that those who had been traduced into the belief that the aforesaid honourable gentleman was any other than one of nature's noblemen, would make immediate reparation.

"Yes," answered Floss, spiritedly, "and that is the very paper that maligned father in the worst manner."

"It is excused here," returned Clarence. "It says: 'Through a mistake and without our knowledge, it was published. Indeed, we wrote an editorial upon the subject, stating our disbelief, but it was misplaced, and consequently not inserted, much to our displeasure and regret.'"

"Human nature, weak, vacillating human nature, swayed by the tide of popular opinion, and double the sin by falsifying in a craven manner," remarked the young doctor with bitterness.

In a moment Simon entered, bearing a tray, upon which there was at least thirty notes.

"Here is more of shallow society," said Mr. Ormsby, breaking the seal of one as he spoke, and reading:

"My dear friend, I hasten to confess my error. I did not believe ill of you, but to keep myself secure, I had to float with the current. Can you—will you forgive me?"

"Very penitent," sneered Rowe, "but if this had not occurred, he would have heaped invective upon you with as much vigour as anyone."

"Yes, it is all too true, but we cannot help it, and I suppose must take our position, and the thousand and one excuses that will be rendered. It is the way of the world, and we cannot resist it, if even we would, which of course is not the case; for I think we are as glad as our mistaken friends are penitent," said Mrs. Ormsby, with a quiet smile, which savoured of triumph.

"That is true, although it is pleasant to indulge in a little vituperation, when we see such canting hypocrisy," replied Rowe.

At this point, Clarence asked his father to go into the library with him.

He arose and they entered the library together, and shutting the door, Clarence said:

"Father, I am about to surprise you."

"Well, my son," he composedly answered, "as surprises are the order of the day, proceed."

"I wish to be married."

"You do, eh?" he smilingly replied. "But where is the young lady?"

"She is in the city, and as good a girl as ever lived."

"Of course! With love that is understood. But really, Clarence, I think you are too young. Woman is a great study; young eyes, young hearts, aided by vivid imagination and inexperience, are apt to paint married life in brighter colours than it really is, and too prone to imagine the object of their adoration only one step removed from the angels. Whereas, they generally find, after marriage, that the angelic creature is suddenly metamorphosed into a woman; the ethereal robe falls off and reveals a prototype of Eve with many of her faults, and after all a human being. This is a fall from the dizzy altitude of imaginary joy, and sometimes certain death to conjugal felicity."

Clarence heard him through very patiently, and then gravely said:

"Father, is this your experience?"

Mr. Ormsby smiled at his son's earnest tone and deprecating gesture, and replied,

"No, I married a human being; didn't look for an angel at all. I was fortunate, I got one whose goodness predominated over her faults. Again, I was older than you when I married; but, by the way, who is this young lady?"

"Her name is Milly Prescott."

"What was her mother's maiden name?"

"Waterford, I believe."

"Waterford—Waterford," mused Mr. Ormsby, meditatively, "I have heard the name, is she rich?"

"If she was, before I married her I should wish to see her treatment to her brothers and sisters, notice her demeanour at home, and compare it with her drawing-room manner. Again I should desire to know whether she was able to dress herself, and lastly, whether or not she revelled in dances with the mercury at ninety-eight, and fondled lap-dogs half the day, and spent the other half in sighing and abusing a poor dumb piano."

"Very good, Clarence—ha, ha! you've more wit and penetration than I thought you had. Is she poor—what would you like to know in that case?"

"I should desire to ascertain whether, instead of helping her parents, she mumbled and grumbled, and

wished some side-whiskered, terrier-faced count to appear and remove her to the castle? Whether or not she vented her spite upon the innocent house-cat; and lastly, whether or not she could step over a broom, instead of picking it up and putting it in its place."

"Better still, Clarence. I think the maxim 'still waters run deep,' applies very well to you. Now, as a disinterested person, does this young lady possess any of those disagreeable qualities?"

"No. As I said, she has been poor—she has seen life; she knows the advantage of having money, and knows how to use it, for poverty has taught her the value of it. She has no frivolity or nonsense about her."

"All good qualities, Clarence; I hope you are not deceived. I should like to see her; send a servant with the carriage for her."

Clarence departed quite elated, and Mr. Ormsby was about to return to the drawing-room, when Doctor Rowe presented himself.

Mr. Ormsby was himself again, and the old, good-humoured smile played around his mouth. Looking up, he said, quizzingly:

"Do you want to get married, too?"

That being the purpose which the young gentleman had in view, the abruptness and pertinence of the questions coming unexpectedly as it did, somewhat embarrassed him, and for a moment he was silent.

In a moment his self-possession returned, and he said:

"Mr. Ormsby, I have come to ask you for the hand of your daughter. When I tell you that I love her, I do not express one-tenth of the emotions that fill my heart. She returns my affection, and she is the only one on this great earth that I can say really loves me. You know as much of my parents as I do. I prize Florence above everything, and when I feel that I have her love, I know that I have a blessing which is seldom equalled."

"Doctor Rowe, I do not doubt you word. My child, you know, is one of the dearest objects on earth to me. You are brave, honourable and noble; take her, she is yours, for I know that you love her, and I have had evidence only too palpable, that she worships you."

Rowe had listened almost breathlessly, and as these welcome words fell upon his ear, he grasped Mr. Ormsby's hand, and said, with sincerity:

"Mr. Ormsby—no, let me say, father—my life shall be consecrated to Florence's love and happiness."

"I do not doubt it Charles, my son, you have proved your devotion."

Rowe turned away with a heart in which all was joy, save one little shade, one corner which palpitated and yearned for more love. On that portion the word mother was written. He found Florence and they adjourned to the sitting-room, where I leave them, their joy too sacred to be revealed to the world.

(To be continued.)

WARNED IN A DREAM.—A few days ago a serious accident occurred in Bulmer village to a picnic party going to Castle Howard. The party made the journey in an omnibus, and it seems that the wife of one of the men hesitated to join the party, and tried to persuade her husband not to go, because she had dreamt a week before that they were in an omnibus and were upset on going through a village and greatly injured, fright awakening her. The man and his wife, however, did go, but on reaching Bulmer the woman became greatly excited. Not only, she remarked, was the omnibus that which she had seen in her dream, but the village was that in which the accident she dreamt of happened. The words were scarcely uttered when the omnibus was upset, and a scene of great confusion resulted. Those on the outside were thrown to the ground with great violence; one man was rendered insensible by the omnibus falling upon him, and several sustained rather serious injuries. The woman to whom the accident was revealed beforehand was herself badly hurt, but her husband's was the worst case, he sustaining a dislocation of an ankle. Medical aid was quickly procured, the sufferers were relieved, and afterwards conveyed to their homes. Every incident of the accident seems to have been pictured in the premonitory dream.

THE LEGAL PROFESSION IN SYDNEY.—The Law Institute continues to work well, although quietly. Nothing farther has been done to realise the idea of incorporating this body, which was strongly entertained some time since. Two other movements which have been started, one for the incorporation of the bar, and the other for the amalgamation of both branches of the legal profession, appear also to have died out, at least for the present. The ranks of both branches of the profession have been largely

recruited during the past year. But for the increased and increasing demand for the country districts, it would be absolutely impossible for so many new practitioners as are from time to time admitted to hope for anything like remunerative practice. As it is, the competition must be very great. "For European practitioners, there is, as a general rule, little hope of professional success in this colony, and we would not advise them to seek our shores with any such hope. The young Australians who are called to the bar, or placed on the roll of attorneys, and whose educational and professional training is of a very high standard, are quite numerous enough to meet the demand, and they will generally have an influence in obtaining practice with which the professional man of Europe cannot hope to compete."

TYRON, THE SHRINE-MAKER.

BY THE

Author of "The Black Knight's Challenge," &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

MYRRHA reclined upon a low couch in the corsair's cabin, and at her feet sat Zorah. Both had been weeping, though the latter had in a measure overcome her outward show of grief. A lamp was suspended from the dingy roof, and by its dim rays the girls were enabled to gain a view of their surroundings. The place exhibited a strange and grotesque mixture of the uncouth and the polished, the homely and the sumptuous. Upon a divan of golden cloth, with frame of sandal wood and mother-of-pearl, was heaped a stack of javelins, while tapestry and drapery of rarest fabric and beauty were disfigured and dragged down by the weight of suspended bows, quivers, and swords.

Myrrha gazed around upon the quaint articles and their singular arrangement; and for a time the occupation afforded a slight relief to her troubled spirit; but gradually a sickening sensation crept through her frame, and she grew faint and weak. The strange motion of the vessel was new to her, and beneath the influence of the deadly sickness that finally overcame her, she sank into a state of utter disregard of external dangers. Her brain reeled; objects grew dim and indistinct about her; her hands fell nerveless at her side; and, all unconscious of the efforts of Zorah to revive her, she sank back upon the couch and forgot that she lived.

It was morning, bright and clear, when the fair daughter of Saxones awoke from her unconsciousness; and when she felt the fresh air, imparted from the gentle breeze that found entrance at the open windows, her sea-sickness had nearly passed away. There was wine upon a sideboard, the bottles being confined by loops of cord secured to the side of the cabin, and of this Zorah persuaded her mistress to drink. The beverage, pure and agreeable to the palate, revived her, and as the generous warmth enlivened her faculties, her scattered senses were recalled, and she knew where she was, and what she had suffered.

The sun had been up an hour or more from its bed of waters, and its bright, warm beams came leaping through the interstices of the closely latticed windows, resting with brilliant and varying effect upon the polished arms that hung upon the opposite wall. Myrrha saw the golden messengers of the king of day, and the sight made her more sad and gloomy, for the brilliant sheen afforded to her mind only a stern and painful contrast with her own unhappiness. The corsair had spoken kindly to her, and had treated her with marked deference; but this, she believed, was only the offspring of self-interest—the smiling surface beneath which lurked the demon of avarice and ruin. Again arose the picture of that fate more dreadful than any to which Octavius would have consigned her, and an involuntary cry of pain broke from her lips. Zorah's words of consolation had lost their soothing power, for they had come to lack strength and assurance. The daughter of Tyron herself needed consolation, for her turn to fear and to suffer had come. The corsair had found beauty in her face, and the picture presented to her conception was not less dark and forbidding than was that which Myrrha had conjured up.

And so they both sat and mourned, now absorbed by their own melancholy reflections, and anon murmuring their thoughts to each other, until the sun had almost reached its meridian height. They were wondering why they were left so long undisturbed, when the door was opened, and the corsair captain entered. He was a man of bold and daring look; but in his boldness there was nothing noble. It was the daring of the beast of prey, and cupidity was plainly stamped upon his swart features. For several moments he stood near the entrance, and regarded his fair prisoners in silence. An expression of rare

satisfaction beamed upon his face as he gazed upon the marvellous beauty of Myrrha, and taking a step forward, he said:

"Let me hope, lady, that you have not suffered from neglect. I know you had everything at hand necessary to your comfort, so I left you to find repose, which I trust has been vouchsafed to you."

Myrrha gazed up into her captor's face, but knew not how to reply.

"I am sure you have rested well," continued the corsair. "You are looking far better than I expected to find you—both you and your fair companion—and I think the sea agrees with you. I think you may promise yourselves a pleasant voyage."

Again Myrrha ventured to return the captain's gaze, and this time her speech found utterance.

"Whither go you, sir? Where will you land us?"

"My destination is Tarsus."

Myrrha uttered an exclamation of alarm.

"Tarsus!" she repeated, as soon as she could think.

"Is it the city of Cilicia, in the far east, where the cold Cydnus flows down from icy mountains?"

"The same, lady."

"And what do you there? What—what—will you do with me?"

"One so beautiful as you should not borrow trouble on the score of coming fate."

Myrrha shuddered.

"Will you not tell us what our coming fate is to be?" asked Zorah.

"That I can scarcely do," replied the corsair, evasively, but yet with a sparkle of pleasurable anticipation in his eyes.

"You know your own purpose," suggested Zorah, with a touch of indignation in her look and tone.

"Oh, yes," responded the captain, with a significant nod in return for Zorah's indignant flash; "I know what I shall do; but then I don't pretend to read the fate of others. The gods only know these things."

"One thing, at least, you can tell, sir," exclaimed Myrrha, starting to her feet. "Is it your purpose to—"

But she dared not, or could not, frame the sentence. Her voice failed her, and covering her face with her hands, she sank back upon her couch.

"Come, come, my pretty one—be not so coy and fearful. Out with your question. What would you have asked?"

"She would have asked, sir," volunteered Zorah, sustained in the presence of the corsair by a spirit of pride, which could not be entirely overcome: "Do you intend to sell us?"

"Umph!" muttered the freebooter, calculatingly.

"It isn't often that I secure such a prize as this; and I think I must make the most of it now that it is in my hands. But you must not fear. I will not sell you—either of you—to a life of drudgery."

This speech, so cool and so heartless, and yet so emphatic, fell like a thunderbolt upon the senses of Myrrha, and as the full meaning of the words appeared to her, the fount of life seemed freezing in its channels. She realised that meaning readily, for it was the same dreadful spectre of fate which had haunted her thoughts since she had been in the corsair's power.

No tears came now to her relief, and she could only groan in the bitterness of her misery. At length she looked up in the face of her captor. He did not appear positively ugly or remorseless. He had human features, and he might have a spark of humanity in his heart.

"Oh, kind sir, spare me! Carry me back to Pompeii, and you shall receive a price far larger than you can realise elsewhere."

"No, no, lady. I cannot afford to run myself into the king's power."

"I meant not the king, sir. There is another in Pompeii who will pay my ransom an hundred-fold—and him you need not fear. Oh, no—he would rather bless you. I would not be delivered up to the king."

The corsair smiled a grim smile.

"I fear I must refuse you, pretty one. I should not care to venture back to Pompeii at present."

"Will you not give ear to my prayer?" still pleaded the sufferer, sinking down, and clinging to her captor's knees. "I am fatherless and motherless—of gentle blood—and affianced to a noble youth. Oh, do not sell me into bondage! Rather kill me where I am. Kill me, sir—but do not heap such cruel misery upon me!"

"You must not think me cruel, fair lady, for I am not. I am only just to myself. You will waste words in urging me thus, for I cannot let you go. Indeed, you don't look at the matter in a proper light. You may promise yourself that your lot will not be a hard one. I will be bound that you shall fall into hands as kind and gentle as any in your native city."

"Oh, misery, misery!" groaned Myrrha, wringing

her hands in anguish. "I would rather work, toil, spin—aye, even dig in the field, and live upon husks in a common stall, than share the lot you intimate."

The freebooter lifted the pleading girl to her feet, and as she tottered back to the couch, he said, with a slight touch of kindly feeling:

"There is one favour I grant beforehand—I grant it unasked—and you can make the most of it, for you may rely upon its fulfilment."

The heart-broken girl opened her eyes.

"You shall both be sold to the same person."

That is," he added, with an emphasis not to be mistaken, "if you give me no trouble."

Myrrha pressed her hands upon her bosom, as though to stifle the groan that burst therefrom. And yet she had promise of a boon. The man had power to separate her from Zorah. Oh, horror! She dared not tempt such a fate. She would plead no more.

"Should you want anything," concluded the corsair, drawing backward as he spoke, "you have only to touch yonder bell, and your summons shall be immediately answered. Let me hope that I may find you in better spirits when I come again."

And with this he turned and left the cabin.

"Is it not dreadful?" whispered Myrrha, gazing up into the tear-wet face of her faithful companion—a

tear-damp it was, from sympathy with her sister in suffering rather than from regard of self.

"It is, indeed," responded Zorah. "But yet, let us not give way to despair. There may yet be ground for hope."

"And where—oh, where—can you find it?"

"If we both go together—and I am sure the man will keep his promise—we may find some means of escape."

"That is a faint hope, dear Zorah."

"Let us cherish it, at least."

"I will try."

"And make up your mind, as I have up made mine, that we will live only for escape. Two heads may conjure up a plan which one alone could never conceive. It is not all dark."

Zorah had really brought herself to entertain the hope she had pictured, and under such influence Myrrha began to gain strength and courage. At least, in her drowning condition she had found a straw upon which to cling.

The day passed slowly and drearily away, and when night had fallen down again upon the sea, the girls called for the first time for food. It was speedily brought, and as they appeased the gnawing hunger which they had allowed to come, they felt better and stronger; though the food had no property that could relieve them of their grief. Myrrha thought now of her lover; and in the depth of her soul, where his image was enshrined, she felt a sharp pang which no present gleam of hope could allay.

And so the time passed on. The story of to-day was repeated to-morrow; and the presence of the dread fear of separation as a penalty of infraction of the corsair's rule of conduct kept the fair prisoners dumb upon the subject of their griefs in his presence. The days multiplied themselves into a dismal sum of time; until finally, at the end of two weeks, the ship entered the river Cydnus. The girls looked forth and beheld the green herbage, and in the distance they saw the walls and the battlements of a city. Their morning's meal was brought to them while they were thus engaged; and as they ate Zorah said:

"Dear Myrrha, we are almost at our journey's end, and we shall be wise if we prepare to meet the fate that draweth nigh. We have seen enough of our captor to know that his purpose is fixed, and that no prayers or entreaties on our part can move him. Let us, then, offer no resistance; for, be sure, the more quietly we appear to submit, the more mild will be our treatment, and the less narrowly shall we be watched."

"I know you speak the truth, my sister, and that your counsel is good," returned Myrrha, her eyes filling with the first tears that had come to her relief for many days. "But oh, how can I hide the promptings of a rebellious spirit—how even appear to submit?"

"We must submit," responded Zorah, philosophically.

"I know we must; but how can I look upon the fate calmly, even in outward appearance?"

"But you will promise not to resist—not to make our captor angry."

"I shall not resist. I am too nearly broken-hearted—too weak—for that. They may lead me to my death if they choose!"

"Say not so, Myrrha."

"I speak only as I feel," returned the sorrow-stricken maiden.

"Then away with the feeling, dear Myrrha. When first I knew the dread power that had seized

me, and realised the full import of our captor's purpose, my heart sank within me; but I have plucked it up again, and now it is firm enough and strong enough to plot for that freedom of which they think to rob us. I know that you have a source of anguish not present in my bosom; and, oh, dear sister, the gods know how deeply I sympathise with you. I know how cruelly your heart-strings must be torn in the rending of love's strong, pure bonds. But, Myrrha, take courage. Think, if we do escape—and I firmly believe we shall—how blissful the hour that restores you to Festus. Oh, if you could but look forward with such a hope!"

There was something magically persuasive in the tone and manner of the shrine-maker's daughter; for, with her rare qualities of heart, she possessed much of her father's self-reliant firmness, and much of his power of reason. She wound her arms around her companion's neck, and gazed up with such an imploring look—with so much love and tenderness, and with such wealth of sisterly affection in her lustrous eyes—that Myrrha could not resist the spell; and, ere she knew it, the bright angel of hope had gained strong hold upon her spirit.

"Promise me that you will be firm," pleaded Zorah.

"I will try," replied Myrrha, with more confidence of manner than she had hitherto displayed.

"Then you will succeed." And thus speaking, Zorah kissed away the gloom from the face of her friend.

It was almost noon when the corsair called for the girls to attend him on deck; and as they reached the open space, and looked forth over the low bulwarks, they could but experience a sense of pleasurable emotion in view of the scene that lay spread out around them. They were a few miles up the Cydnus river, in the midst of one of the gardens of the world, and nature and art combined to present to the eye a picture of rarest beauty and magnificence.

Sotius and his companions had been sent on shore some time previously, and now the fairer prizes were to follow. A sumptuously furnished barge was alongside, beneath the silken canopy of which Myrrha and Zorah were seen seated, and directly afterwards, the gaily bedecked barque was gliding towards the shore, bearing them swiftly on in the path of their strange destiny.

CHAPTER IX.

OCTAVIUS, the king, was in a dark and gloomy mood. The very gods seemed to have conspired against him.

It was nearly noon on the day succeeding the capture of the barge; messengers had been sent all up and down the coast in quest of Sotius and his party; and they had returned, bringing intelligence of the strange opening which they had found in the pavement, at the base of an overturned pedestal of fine porphyry, amid the ruins of the temple of Isis, and also of the apartment they had found beneath. They furthermore reported that the royal barge had been picked up far out at sea by some fishermen, and that it had been empty. The monarch now leaned against one of the pillars of his divan and all visitors were shut out. He was not in a mood to render judgment, for the inexplicable network of circumstances which had so mysteriously baffled him in all his efforts to gain possession of the daughter of Saxones harassed and perplexed him till he had no judgment left.

"Protos," he at length said, turning to where the prince stood, "if Tyron be once more in my power, he shall not escape my vengeance. He is at the bottom of this business."

"So I think," returned Protos. "And yet I fear he cannot be taken. There is a mystery about the man entirely beyond my skill to comprehend, and he seems to be possessed of superhuman power—else how did he escape from the centurion and his guard, even while they had their eyes upon him?"

"He must have had some secret hiding-place which the centurion did not find," suggested the king, unwilling to believe that his enemy was so favoured above himself.

"That is impossible," persisted Protos, "for, according to the centurion's account, he must have gone up the stairs; and I know there is no earthly place of concealment, save such as are open to ready detection, and no way of escape, save by the stairs at the outer wall, which pass was securely guarded. And there is another unaccountable event—the presence of the priest of Jupiter in the shrine-maker's house."

"Nay, my son. That is easily accounted for. Tyron makes all the shrines and metal ornaments for the temple; so that the priest may have legitimately been there on business."

"Such is probably the case," admitted the prince.

"And yet from what I have seen, and can learn, I am forced into the belief that there is something wonderful in his power."

"And what have you heard of the shrine-maker that is so strange?" asked Octavius. "What is the prominent event?"

"I will tell you," said the prince. "Many years ago—fifteen, some say it is, while others say it is more—Tyron first appeared in Pompeii, and voluntarily sold himself to old Festus for a certain amount of gold; and this gold he used in making ornaments for the Temple of Jupiter. It is asserted that the sacrifice of his liberty was an offering to the king of the gods, who hath since taken him into especial favour. And so it would seem, for many are the authentic accounts of his mysterious disappearances and reappearances about the city; and even our own experience is not barren of proof to the same end. To tell the truth, my father, I begin to fear that man."

"No, no, my son. 'Tis not for us to fear such as him. I will yet capture him. There is some deception—some sort of trickery—in all this. And, furthermore, his personal prowess and prodigious strength give him place in the awe of the masses; and whom they hold in awe they invariably elevate above the plane of mortality. If I do capture him, be sure I'll hold him."

"If such be your purpose," said Protos, soberly, "the sooner 'tis done the better. And, on the whole, I think he had best be arrested, if the thing be possible."

"Of course the thing is possible," cried Octavius, considerably reassured by the acquiescence of his son. "Pshaw! There's nothing about the man so strange, after all. He has wondrous muscular power, and is an adept in the use of weapons, which have evidently been his playthings from youth; and he has secret friends, too, in the palace—traitors to their king—else how could he have passed out from his dungeon? The next time I'll have him watched by those I can trust—I'll keep him till we gain possession of Saxones' daughter—and then he dies!"

Octavius started from the place where he had been standing, and strode across the apartment. His step was such as a man takes when he seeks to settle more firmly his resolution. For some minutes he paced to and fro, and finally he stopped and spoke with something of the dignity of a king.

"Protos, you may have the slaves sent in to attend upon the throne, and if there be any without who desire audience on particular business, they may be admitted."

The prince had started upon his mission, but ere he had gained half the distance between the throne and the main entrance, the great door was suddenly and unceremoniously thrown open, and the gaze of the astounded pair rested upon the towering form of Tyron! He bore in his hand a naked sword, and his features were wrought upon by mighty emotion. He looked like an avenging god in his fierce wrath, and the very atmosphere in which he moved seemed to grow dark and ominous with threats of Olympian thunder.

Octavius made a motion as if to call for his slaves. It was a weak, fluttering motion; but its import was evident.

"Move not, at the peril of your lives!" commanded Tyron, in tones which closely resembled the low growling of the crouched lion. "I mean you no harm, if you do my bidding; nor will I take harm from you. I knew you were alone, and I have come to ask a simple question."

"But the guards—how passed you them?" demanded the monarch, whose great fear and terror could not wholly overcome a kindly desire to know how his divan had thus come to be unguarded.

"I passed them by means of a power you cannot comprehend. None heeded my presence, for none dreamed that Tyron was nigh."

Again Protos made a motion towards the door, but a simple look from the formidable intruder was sufficient to arrest his steps.

The king began to realise that he was fairly entrapped; and though his wrath was great, yet his fear was greater, for well he knew that a single sweep of that terrible sword, in the hand of him who wielded it, would be fatal! There was a dreadful majesty in the shrine-maker's look, and the fire of his fiercely-burning eyes told too plainly for misconception that his purpose was a fixed one. As a way-farer might quail before the crouched and hungry lion, so did the monarch of Pompeii now quail before his subject. No slaves were at hand to do his bidding—no soldiers to strike the blow he dared not himself attempt.

"You spoke of a question," he at length gasped. "What is it?"

"I have come to ask what you have done with the daughter of Saxones."

"By the life of me!" cried the king, brightening

up, "this is the very question I would have asked of thee."

"Do not lie to me, King Octavius! Where have you placed the Lady Myrrha?"

"Nowhere. She is not here. I have not seen her. She has not been in my keeping."

"Did you not send your servants last night to hang upon my steps?"

"I sent men to watch the course of young Festus."

"Aye—and those men found Myrrha, and dragged her forth from her resting-place. And my own child they took with her—the apple of my eye—the delight of my soul! Now, king, tell me where they are!"

"I know not."

"Beware!" pronounced Tyron, while the fire of his eye seemed to burn into the very soul of the monarch.

"In truth I have not seen the lady; nor have I seen your child," persisted Octavius, in both terror and surprise. "This morning some fishermen picked up my barge at sea; but not a soul was in it. I had been sure 'twas your work."

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed Tyron, who felt an assurance that the king spoke the truth, "all may have been drowned!"

"No—that cannot have been," returned Octavius; "for the fisherman assured us that the barge had not been overturned, and that there had not been the slightest disarrangement of furniture."

Tyron bent another keen, searching glance upon the monarch, but he could read nothing in the anxious face but simple truth and honest wonder. Presently he started, and clutched his hands nervously.

"Did not the Cyprian ship leave the harbour last night?" he asked.

"She did," said Protos, answering for his father.

"Then my suspicions of that vessel may have had good foundation. If she was a corsair, as I suspect, we may safely judge the agency through which the disappearance of the inmates of the barge has been wrought."

"Then by the immortal Jove!" cried the king, "I'll cause search to be made, upon land and sea, until the Cyprian is found—or, at least, until the daughter of Saxones is restored."

"You will not find her, sire," said Tyron; "and it could not benefit you if you did. 'Tis you who have brought this calamity about, and you had better now let the matter drop."

"Never! never!" vociferated the monarch, furiously. "I'll find her though every ship in my realm be called into requisition."

"If such be your determination," rejoined the shrine-maker, with deep significance in his look and tone, "the sooner you make the trial the better. And," he added, evidently holding back some words that had framed themselves for utterance, "I hope you will be successful."

Octavius was aroused by this speech, for he well knew its meaning; and for the time the pride of the king arose above the fear of the man.

"I'll find the lady; and I'll keep her, too!" he exclaimed. "And as for you, poor slave! your head is not worth the bond of a beggar. You shall yet learn what it is to be heard and insult your king!"

Tyron smiled another of his grim smiles; and anon a shadow of pity dwelt upon his face—all of which Octavius saw, and whereat he raved.

"I pray the gods to aid you in your search for the missing girl," said the shrine-maker; "and when you have found her, be sure I shall wait upon you. In the meantime, I leave you to follow out your own devices. So, for the present, I bid you farewell."

"Hold!" cried the king, in a frenzy of doubt and curiosity. "Tell me, strange, venturesome man, who and what you are."

"One who could read your destiny, Octavius Ilos-tilius, as plainly as you can read the events of the past hour."

"I ask not what you can do, but what you are."

"I am Tyron, an artisan of Pompeii."

"Aye—and you are more."

"Be sure I am. You may set me down as the master of both a king and a prince."

Octavius grasped the hilt of the dagger he wore in his girdle, and Protos took a step forward; but not alone the trenchant blade of the mysterious man was it that restrained them. Before his majestic look they quailed as before the dread lightning-bolt of heaven.

"Farewell, Octavius, for the present. We shall meet again."

The king offered no resistance—he moved not from his place as the shrine-maker turned to depart, and before he had collected his scattered senses the visitor was gone.

"Arouse the guard!—What ho!—Without there!—Stop the shrine-maker!" shouted Protos, break-

ing from the dread charm that had held him spell-bound.

A full score of soldiers and attendants came rushing to the chamber.

"Stop the shrine-maker!" shrieked Octavius.

"What shrine-maker?" returned an officer, in blank amazement.

"Tyron, I mean. Passed he not out but now?"

"No, sire."

"Thou liest!" exclaimed the mad monarch, stamping and foaming. "He passed you, surely, for he left here but a moment since."

"Then he must have left by your private passage, sire."

"Spring to the gates! Summon all the guard, and let every avenue be closed!"

The soldiers hastened to obey the order; but no Tyron had been seen to enter or go away. Every nook and corner of the vast pile was searched, even to the king's own bed-chamber—but all efforts to find trace of the mysterious man were fruitless.

"Tis strange—'tis passing belief?" muttered Octavius, as he stood trembling in his son's presence.

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" echoed Protos, a fearful quaking manifest from head to foot.

"Who—who can it be?"

"Not the man he appears."

"But what does he appear?"

"Indeed, I know not."

"Neither do I."

And then the king and the prince gazed upon one another in silence, each busy with his own troublous reflections and forebodings. Not only was there something alarming to them in the mysterious power of the shrine-maker, but he certainly had some inexplicable connection with affairs that were to them as matters of life and death. They wondered, and fretted, and conjectured; and the deeper they went into the trackless investigation, the more puzzled and perplexed did they become; and more than once the king shook himself, and appealed to the prince, to know if he were awake, vainly hoping that the recent interview with the mystic artisan had been but the creature of a dream.

But Octavius knew that it had been all too real; and he and his son were stricken with deadly fear, the phantoms of which grew to mighty evils in prospect, making cowards of them both.

CHAPTER X.

NIGHT had drawn her curtain over the city. Tyron and Festus sat together in the merchant's dwelling. The powerful artisan leaned his brow upon his hand, and a bright tear trickled down and fell upon a bosom that was heaving with strong emotion. Festus' eyes were dry, but red with recent weeping, and his face was wrought upon by the bitter anguish that racked his heart.

"Alas! we both have cause for sorrow!" murmured the youth.

"Aye, my son—for sorrow deep and harrowing!"

Festus was startled by the sound of that voice, and gazed up to see if it was really his friend who had spoken. It was so deep, so strange, and had such volume of solemn melody! It was Tyron; and thus assured, he continued:

"You have lost a precious child; and I—oh, my soul! what a loss is mine!"

"Courage! courage!" exclaimed Tyron, starting up from his seat, and brushing away the tear-track from his cheek. "Some kind power will surely befriend us. Oh, clouds far, far darker than this have rested upon my life, and yet the sunlight has come again, and again. The heart will throb in its pain, and the fount of grief will burst its gates; but there is hope in the future if we have faith and courage to look forward. Sink not into the slough of useless repining, but up, and arm your spirit with firm and manly resolution. Festus, I'll not shed another tear till I can shed tears of joy in the finding of my child!"

"Ah, Tyron, you cannot suffer as I suffer!"

"And why?"

"Your spirit is more stubborn; your heart is stouter; your life has been different."

"Aye, young man, my life has indeed been different—a life of strange events!"

Again young Festus started, and gazed earnestly into the face of the shrine-maker. What was it that wrought so upon his wonder? 'Twas surely Tyron—and yet it seemed Tyron transfigured. There was grandeur and majesty which he had never before noticed, and the whole man appeared elevated and etherealised.

By-and-bye Tyron spoke again:

"Festus, I must leave you; and I go to a grief you know not of. Oh, how little dream you of the lot that is mine! I have a fearful foreboding, and my heart is heavy!"

"And but now, good Tyron, you bade me be courageous and strong."

"Aye,—but that was of hope for the lost ones. My great grief is for that which may be lost. But I must away. Detain me not."

"You can tell me whither thou goest from my sheltering roof. Surely, not to thine own?"

"No. To the temple."

"So late? You will not gain entrance."

Tyron shook his head, and his heavy brows were corrugated by a grim smile. He spoke not, however, but silently passed out into the darkness of the night, and Festus marked the dying away of the heavy footfall upon the distant pavement.

It was midnight in Pompeii—midnight dark and cheerless! The wind moaned dimly through the streets, and a funeral veil shuts out the stars! Nature seemed buried in grief—weeping in tearless agony.

From out the great temple came a score of men, and borne in their midst was a bier, and upon it something covered with sackcloth! With slow and solemn tread they crossed the court, and the square beyond, and then turned towards the royal palace. Galba, the king's chief officer, led the way, and his steps betrayed much anxiety.

The gates of the palace were reached, and when Galba was recognised they were thrown open without further question. Octavius heard the tramp of feet upon the pavement of the court, and he hastened to the divan, accompanied by his son. Galba entered, and then came those who bore the hidden burden, which they set down in the centre of the chamber. The light from the golden lamps seemed to have assumed a deathly hue, and as the lurid glare fell upon the bier, the king shrank back with awe and dread.

"Sire," spoke Galba, hoarsely, "your commands have at length been obeyed. We have brought him—dead!"

"Whom?" asked both king and prince in concert.

Galba pointed silently to the burden which his followers had deposited upon the pavement.

Octavius stepped forward, and raised the sackcloth. It fell from his nerveless fingers and slid off upon the marble floor; and the light of the flaring lamps rested upon the pale, cold features of Tyron! There he lay, still and stark, his broad bosom at rest from its heaving, and his lips closed in death! There could have been no struggle—no pain—in the passing out of the spirit from its mortal tenement.

An expression of calm and placid serenity marked the grand face, and about the lips lingered a peaceful smile, as though the last ken of failing sense had been of sweet answer to his prayers from the realms of the Eternal!

"The gods be praised for this!" ejaculated the monarch, recoiling from the corpse. "Tell me, good Galba, where did you find him? How came this thing about? I can as yet hardly credit the evidence of my own senses."

"We found him in the temple, sire—in the Temple of Jupiter."

"Did you find him dead?"

"Yes."

"In mercy's name, explain! How was it?"

"Thus it was, sire: As we passed the temple to-night in our rounds, after having relieved the guards of the first watch—not an hour since—we heard the voice of the high-priest Axion, loudly supplicating the gods. The main entrance from the grand piazza was open, and when we saw the light of the sacred lamps streaming forth among the outer columns, we ventured to enter."

"At the feet of Jupiter, lay the corpse of Tyron, and over the lifeless remains stood the priest, who treated us kindly, and informed us that the shrine-maker had died but a short time previously, and that his exit from life had been calm and peaceful. He told us, furthermore, that the mysterious man had not been unprepared. He had had a presentiment of his fate, and almost his last request was, that when he was dead his body should be conveyed to the royal palace. So Axion bade us bear it hither, here to remain until he came for it."

"And why this strange request? Why should the man have wished his body brought to my palace?" queried the king, gazing with awe and wonder upon the calm face of the dead.

"The priest told us," replied Galba, "that Tyron gave the direction partly in accordance with your wish—to behold him once more, dead or alive—and partly in answer to the will of Jupiter. While he stood there, sire, the Oracle plainly spoke, saying: 'Bear the body of our beloved to the king!'"

Octavius moved farther away from the corpse, gazing first upon his officer, and then upon the emblem of mortality before him. He was amazed and wonder-stricken.

"Strange, strange," he muttered. "But let the Oracle be obeyed. The sight does not make me weep."

"Ye gods!" ventured the prince, who had been regarding the corpse with deep attention, "how I wish those lips could have whispered the secret of their life ere they had been closed for ever. It is no common story that is now locked up in that cold bosom."

"I believe you, my son."

"In all probability the high priest knows the story," suggested the officer.

"Right, good Galba. When will he come?"

"He said not, sire; but I should judge that he meant not for the body to remain here long. He will take final charge of it, and carefully embalm it."

"The priest was himself desirous that the remains should be brought hither?"

"He seemed so, sire."

"Probably," said Protos, "that your majesty might be assured of the man's death."

"Thou art right, my son. Axion was thoughtful of our royal pleasure."

"He said you would like to see the corpse," added Galba.

"And he said truly," returned the monarch, now regarding the stark and massive form with more courage and composure. "The priest seemed anxious to please me?"

Galba, to whom these last words were addressed, shook his head dubiously.

"I cannot think, sire, that he bears you great good-will?"

"Ha!" gasped Octavius, starting at this hint. "What said he of our royal self?"

"It was not what he said, sire; but more in the tone and manner of his speech. He manifested great love for Tyron, even to tearful utterance; but when he spoke of yourself, it was with scoffing emphasis, and the fire of hatred burned plainly in his eyes."

The king stamped upon the pavement, and uttered a fierce oath; but directly he calmed himself, and, with a bitter laugh, continued:

"Pshaw! Axion cannot harm me, so let him scoff. Though I may not lay a finger upon the high priest of Jupiter, yet he cannot bring his sacred power to clash with the crown; so there we are even. If he can scoff, so can I. His person is not too sacred for cool disregard."

"But," urged Protos, anxiously, "treat him not roughly in your speech when he comes. Bear outward show of reverence to the high office he fills. With such a prize as this we must well bear the burden of priestly dislike. And, moreover," continued the prince, as he marked his father's spirit of opposition, at the same time sinking his voice to a whisper, "you cannot afford to make an enemy of him, for be sure the high priest of Jupiter hath greater room in the hearts of the people than hath he who rules them!"

Octavius winced as though a point of steel had touched his vitals, for he knew that what his son had said was true. He took a few turns up and down the apartment, and finally, without referring again to the distasteful subject, he said:

"Come, my son—these are unseasonable hours for wakefulness to those who have no watch to keep. Let us retire, and seek our rest." Then turning to his officer, he added:

"The body will remain here to-night, Galba. Cover it again with the sackcloth, and hold your watch and ward over it until morning. The man slipped from you while living; see if you can hold him fast now that he is dead."

When the royal pair had departed, Galba closed and bolted the doors, and then returned and reverently covered the corpse. Most of the lamps were extinguished, after which the soldiers divided themselves for equal watches during the remainder of the night. Those whose turn it was to hold watch paced silently to and fro, and they came not near to the silent thing they had been set to guard but with feelings of awe and dread. To them there was even now much of the mysterious and the terrible about the sleeping hero. Aye—and when they remembered that Death was present in their midst, they shrank and covered more and more. Dim spectres arose to their overwrought imaginations, flitting to and fro in the gloom, and low moanings broke the air about them. Backward, and still backward, they shrank, until they had reached the spot where their companions slept; and there they stood, all through the watch, in solemn, mystic dread, yet not daring to remove their gaze from the dark pall that covered their ghostly charge.

(To be continued.)

RECENT MORTALITY IN SCOTLAND.—The deaths of 2,686 persons were registered in the eight princ-

pal towns of Scotland during the month of June, and the rate of mortality was far above the average of any corresponding month since registration began in Scotland. To the prevalence of cold northerly and easterly winds the unhealthiness thus indicated is mainly ascribed.

FACETIÆ.

A MIRACLE!—"Mr. Showman," said a greenhorn at a menagerie, "can the leopard change his spots?" "Yes, sir," replied the individual who stirs up the wild beasts; "when he is tired of one spot he can easily go to another."

FOUND OUT.—If you call upon an acquaintance and hear him, at the top of the stairs, directing Betty to tell you he is out, never conclude he is stating that which is not true; for you have assuredly found him out.

THREE STORIES.

Freddy is a little one of seven years' growth, the son of a minister, who, with his wife, has just arrived at a field of labour. Hearing his mother say to his father that she had been deceived by his saying the parsonage was a three-story building, when, in fact, it was only two, he said:

"Ma!"

"Well, Freddy?"

"The kitchen is one."

"Yes."

"This floor is two, and the story that pa told is three."

"WELL, Patrick," asked the doctor, "how do you feel to-day?" "Och, doctor dear, I enjoy very poor health entirely. The rumatics are very distressin', indade; when I go to slape, I lay awake all night, and me toes is swilled up as big as a goose hen's egg, so whin I stand up I fall down immediately."

BENJAMIN JEKYLL was at the same time the brightest wit and the most shameless punster of Westminster Hall in the reign of George III. One of his best displays of brilliant impudence was perpetrated on a Welsh judge, who was alike notorious for his greed of office and his want of personal cleanliness. "My dear sir," Jekyll observed, in his most amiable manner, to this most unamiable personage, "you have asked the minister for almost everything else, why don't you ask him for a piece of soap and a nail-brush?"

PLUNGERS.

No. 1: "There's our Bill's boat coming round the pier-head!"

No. 2: "That isn't your Bill's boat!"

No. 1: "Bet ye a 'undred pound!"

No. 2: "I can't bet no 'undred pound—couldn't pay, if I lost!"

No. 1: "Well, tell ye what I'll do—I'll bet ye a button!"—*Fun.*

TOO SEVERE!—A contemporary states that a patent has been taken out in America for the manufacture of waterproof paper, and adds, "it will be no uncommon thing by-and-bye to carry a quart of milk home in a paper bag." It is very odd that the notion of a water-proof bag should at once suggest to a Londoner that it will do to carry milk.—*Fun.*

GOOD IN EVERYTHING.—No man need fear being called over the coals when—far distant be the day—our "black diamonds" are exhausted; and what a happy day will it be for the schoolboy when the slate quarries give in!—*Fun.*

A CLOSE SHAVE.

Barber: "No! Can't shave yer!"
Dustmen: "Why not? You've just been a-shavin' a sweep."

Barber: "Oh, yes, that's all very well; but, yer know, one must draw a line somewhere!"—*Fun.*

WUT AT WIMLEEDON.—A Scotch volunteer, one of the knot of critics round the firing-point where the Line-prizes were being shot for, on asking, with some contempt in his voice, "Whaur the lads come frae?" and being told "Aldershot," was heard to mutter, complacently, "Hech, sirs! Aulder shots and be better shots, I'm thinkin'!"—*Punch.*

SPADE AND SAW. P. RIFLE AND BAYONET.—The sorely-tried Military Authorities who have to decide on inventions, have had laid before them a light steel spade, which screws into the butt of the rifle, as the saw-backed sword-bayonet into its muzzle. When an old-fashioned soldier used the butt of his piece as a weapon, he used to be said to "club his musket." Henceforth, it seems, spades will be added to clubs, to help the points of the military game. But now that "spade-drills" and "earthworks" are to be among the chief reliances of the soldier of the future, the art of war seems really to be changing into husbandry. "Turning rifles into spades, and bayonets into saws," is quite as apt a symbol of

the change, as "beating spears into shares, and swords into sickles."—*Punch.*

"NOBLESS OBLIGE."

STODGE (in answer to the reproachful look of his Cabman): "Well, it's your right fare; you know that as well as I do!"

Cabby: "Oh! which I'm well aware o' that, sir! But—" ("more in sorrow than in anger")—"An' you a Artis', sir!" [Gets another shilling.—*Punch.*]

A REAL GRIEVANCE.—The Thames Tunnel is disestablished. It was finally closed a few nights ago, and has been bought by a railway. This, you know, is a grievance for Londoners. When country friends came to town, we have been accustomed to send them, first, to the top of the Monument; secondly, to the Thames Tunnel; and, if they ever returned (which few did), thirdly, to the British Museum, which completed their annihilation. Now the Tunnel is gone. What substitute is offered? Somebody suggest something. It must be a very long way from civilised regions, very improving, and awfully fatiguing. As everybody will be off in a few days, to sponge on the hospitalities of country friends, there is no immediate haste, but it is due to them that we should have something invented before the winter.—*Punch.*

OVER THE WAY.

At my window I sit, in the calm twilight,
The silver link 'twixt the day and the night,
And with pitying glances I watch the play
Of the motherless children over the way.

I know she is dead: when a mother dies,
A memory lurks in her children's eyes,
And makes them sad, with a shade of care
That never was in them when mother was there.

Strangers they are, and never will know
How my lone heart throbs for that grief and woe.
Ah! I think, each day, though the years have fled,
Of my wild despair o'er my sainted dead.

I have named the children over the way:
The one with the golden curls is May;
Ruth with the hazel eyes is seven,
And motherly Maude I am sure is eleven.

I have called him Milton, the sad-faced boy
Who reads his book with a fevered joy;
But my pet of all is the teasing Ned,
With his saucy eyes, and his frowny head.

But two years old is the baby Bell,
With tiny ears, like some wave-washed shell,
With cheeks pink-tinted, and teeth like pearls,
And flaxen hair in a mesh of curls.

Yes, I sit here in the pale twilight,
Till the gem stars shine in the crown of night;
From the depths of my desolate heart, I pray
For the motherless children over the way.

M. E. T.

GEMS.

MOST men know what they hate, few what they love.

POLITENESS is a coin destined to enrich not him who receives, but him who expends it.

PEACE is the evening star of the soul, as virtue is its sun, and the two are never far apart.

THE ground of almost all our false reasoning is: that we seldom look any farther than on one side of the question.

THE three things most difficult are: to keep a secret, to forget an injury, and to make good use of leisure.

THE man who gives his children habits of truth, industry, and frugality, provides for them better than by giving them a fortune.

HE who forgets the fountain from which he drank, and the tree under whose shade he gambolled in the days of his youth, is a stranger to the sweeter impressions of the human heart.

Whoever feels pain in hearing a good character of his neighbour, will feel a pleasure in the reverse; and those who despair to rise to distinction by their virtues, are happy if others can be depressed to a level with themselves.

THE MAYORALTY.—Mr. Alderman Dakin is the next in rotation on the list of aldermen who have not passed the civic chair, but the worthy alderman, acting under the advice of the eminent physicians by whom he has been attended during his long illness, has determined not to seek this year the honour which, in the ordinary course of events, would have been, in all probability, conferred upon him. He however hopes that, at the expiration of

another twelvemonth, his health will be sufficiently restored to warrant him in assuming the duties of office should the choice of the livery fall then upon him. Meanwhile, Mr. Alderman Besley, who stands next in rotation, is, we believe, willing to serve for the ensuing year, if elected.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

NEW USE FOR HOPS.—Hops have not been generally employed as fodder, and their bitter taste would rather induce the belief that cattle might not fancy that kind of food. An agricultural journal, the *Belier*, however, states that a farmer in the North of France, being short of fodder, mixed some hops with it last autumn; and not only did his cows take to it very well, but that they rewarded him with a large increase in the production of milk.

ORANGES FILLED WITH JELLY.—This is one of the fanciful dishes which make a pretty appearance on a supper table, and are acceptable when much variety is desired. Take some very fine oranges, and with the point of a small knife cut out from the top of each a round about the size of a shilling; then with the small end of a tea or egg spoon, empty them entirely, taking great care not to break the rinds. Throw these into cold water, and make jelly of the juice, which must be well pressed from the pulp, and strained as clear as possible. Colour one half a fine rose colour with prepared cochineal, and leave the other very pale; when it is nearly cold, drain and wipe the orange rinds, and fill them with alternate stripes of the two jellies; when they are perfectly cold cut them in quarters, and dispose them tastefully in a dish with a few light branches of myrtle between them. Calves'-feet or any other variety of jelly, or different blanchmanges, may be used at choice to fill the rinds; the colours, however, should contrast as much as possible.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE trip around the world can now be made in ninety days.

MESSERS. MEARS and STAINBANK, the founders of Big Ben, of Westminster Palace, have just cast a peal of eight bells for Ballarat, Australia, to commemorate the Duke of Edinburgh's escape from assassination.

IN order to promote Mr. Cole's efforts for the organisation of national musical education, the Society of Arts have under consideration to include in their examination programme the grant of certificates of competency for instrumental and perhaps for vocal music.

THE present staff of female nurses at Netley Hospital will leave that establishment in October, and their places are to be filled by trained sisters from St. Thomas's Hospital. This is in accordance with an arrangement made by Sir John Pakington with the Nightingale Committee last year.

ONE OF THE SMALLEST LUNGS OF LONDON.—There is some fear that Chesterfield House, Mayfair, with its golden garden and the stately trees, with their rookery, will be destroyed to make room for a row of new houses. It is said that Mr. Charles Magniac has purchased the site for 180,000*l.*; being rich enough to do this, there is reason to hope that he will live in Chesterfield House himself, and so save one of the few green and open spots left in London.

WOMEN TELEGRAPHISTS.—An interesting assembly has just taken place at Vienna. The association for the improvement of the position of women recently opened a class of telegraphy, and nineteen of the pupils were now to undergo an examination. The director of a telegraphic company was present, and after the young women had given proofs of their theoretical and practical knowledge of the working of the apparatus, the mode of keeping accounts, &c., he arose and announced that all the candidates might at once enter his service.

INTERNATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL EXHIBITION.—A great International Exhibition of dogs, cats, birds, hares, rabbits, squirrels, and other small animals, both domestic and wild, will be held at St. Petersburg in the month of October. This exhibition has been arranged by the Russian Society for the Protection of Animals, and intending exhibitors must forward their pets so that they reach St. Petersburg by the 15th of August. The ordinary rates of carriage on the Russian railways will be reduced 50 per cent. to exhibitors. A supplementary exhibition will also take place of cages and aviaries for birds, dog-kennels, and a variety of other articles necessary in the rearing of our domestic pets. A number of prizes will be awarded.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FAIRLEIGH.—Bathe your hands frequently in warm water, and always of night before going to bed.
M. T. LIVERPOOL.—There are several branches of the society. Consult either a Liverpool or London directory.
R. BECKMANN.—The cuckoo departs southward in July, and so do several other migratory birds.

ELINA J.—Marry the youngest sister. Honour and religion enforce the obligation.

W. K.—Pedestrian exercise is the best preventive of corpulency. Do not indulge too much at table.

MILDRED ASCHAM.—At this distance of time the marriage would be held to be illegal. The law does not allow people to take advantage of their own omissions.

C. B.—Generally all situations in the merchant service are in the gift of the owners or the captain of the vessel. You had better apply to the latter.

G. B.—Refreshment houses for the sale of wine, &c. are licensed in pursuance of an act passed in 1860, amended in 1881.

W. H.—There is no rule for the pronunciation of proper names. *Leominster* is cut down to something like "Lom-stir."

A ROMAN CATHOLIC.—Foreign titles are not acknowledged in the British dominions, unless by royal permission. We do not wish to indulge in disagreeable remarks.

J. C.—Red ink. Boil 1 ounce of Brazil wood in half-a-pint of water for a quarter-of-an-hour; add to the decoction three drachms of gum arabic, and an ounce of rock alum.

J. A.—To the eye, the water of the ocean is apparently level during a calm. But, owing to the globular surface of the earth, really the surface of the water is in conformity with the shape of the earth.

AN ENQUIRER.—Architects can pursue their profession without any preliminary examination. Barristers and attorneys, however, cannot; each have to submit to a strict examination as to their legal attainments.

GROCKE.—Soap was imperfectly known to the ancients. The first mention of it occurs in Pliny and Galen, and the former declares it to be an invention of the Gauls, though he prefers the German to the Gallic soap.

S. A.—We cannot advise, but can throw out a hint. There was a rule in an old debating society which declared, "That any gentleman wishing to speak the whole evening should have a room to himself!"

J. W. R.—You must write to the Secretary at War, at the Horse Guards, and state the name of your brother, and the date of his entering the army. You will, doubtless, be able to learn something about him from that quarter.

O. J.—The real object of education is to give children resources that will endure as long as life endures; habits that time will ameliorate, not destroy; occupations that will render sickness tolerable, solitude pleasant, age venerable, life more dignified.

T. S.—It is usual in marriages solemnised with kindness and friendship, when the parties are in humble circumstances, for the expenses to be divided. In high life the bridegroom is supposed to defray all the cost of the ceremony.

MARY C.—There is no legal rule which requires that you should wear a widow's cap, if you are not accustomed to wear caps, and do not wish to commence the practice. We do not allude to the sentiment of which widows' caps are the exponent. This is a matter of individual feeling.

J. H.—The bans of marriage, after having been read three times in church, are valid for three months after, during which period the ceremony might be performed; but that period having elapsed, the marriage could not take place without a repetition of the bans.

G. T.—The only reason that it is more dangerous to row a boat under a bridge than in the open stream is simply that the current is there stronger, and the rush of waters, owing to the confined space it has to break through, more impetuous.

JIM LONG.—1. To get the requisite polish rub the horn with linseed oil and woolen rags. 2. We do not give opinions as to the solvency of firms and companies. You can easily find out by making inquiries. Get a list of the shareholders.

IVORY.—1. The pianoforte was invented by J. C. Schroder, of Dresden, in 1717; he presented a model of his invention to the court of Saxony, and some time after G. Selterman, a musical instrument maker, began to manu-

facture pianofortes with considerable success. The invention has also been ascribed to an instrument maker at Florence. 2. The square pianoforte was first made by Frederica, an organ builder of Saxony, about 1768. Pianofortes were made in London by Mr. Zampie, a German, in 1766, and have since been greatly improved by Broadwood, Collard, Kirkman, Knard, and others. 3. Piquet was the first known game upon the cards. It was invented by Joquemin for the amusement of Charles VI. of France, then in feeble health, 1390.

NELLY.—1.—You cannot dye the hair lighter, unless you use acids which will destroy it. You might alter the shade a little by washing it with water in which a little soda has been dissolved. 2. We cannot inform unless you give us the quantities.

PHILIP V.—There is a great difference between "speaking what you think" and wounding the feelings of those who do not ask for your opinion. Your self-styled candour, seems to us egotistical impertinence. You will get into trouble if you don't take care.

A. N.—You have been misinformed. The Government has never offered a reward for the discovery of a mode of dyeing cottons and linen scarlet. The English Government never undertakes commercial enterprises. It grants patents to protect the inventors and discoverers of useful appliances, and that is all.

MARY ANNE.—A very nice scented powder for drawers may be made economically as follows:—An ounce of root of the Florentine iris (the orris-root of commerce), a couple of grains of musk (or a few drops of the essence); some rose leaves, with a little salt of tartar strewn on them, are a good addition.

VENUS.—The word placard had its origin in the days when military men wore armour. In the reign of Henry V. soldiers wore breast-plates of two pieces, the lower one rising to a point in the centre, and fastened upon the upper by an ornamental buckle. The lower plate was called the *cleek*.

JUNIOR CLERK.—1. If you have no relations in London we think you would act wisely in accepting the offer of your master to live in the house. At your age it is better to devote most of your time to business, than to waste precious hours in the frivolities of the town. 2. No, we don't approve of music-halls as a rule.

SUMMER EVENING SONG.

Dear children, see, the day is done,
And yonder sinks the warning sun;
He has no voice, but his last rays

Are silent words: "No more more roam,
But with your hearts to God give thanks,
And willingly seek your sacred home."

There—you need not leave these sweet flowers,
So gladly given by golden hours,
But let them still wreath your sweet brows,
And on the thankful mantel place;
They'll odours shed, and morning gem
With a bright, ray welcome's grace.

Come! we have had a glorious day
In Nature's kiss and loving play;
And when to-morrow calls us up,
We'll feel our hearts sing a glad song
Of thanks that we can duly do
Still better through the whole day long.

W. R. W.

RATAPLAN.—1. The first royal licence for a theatre in England was in 1574, to Master Burbage and four others, servants of the Earl of Leicester, to act plays at the Globe, Bankside; but long before that time miracle plays were represented in the fields. 2. The Haymarket theatre was built in 1792. Mr. Buckstone's management commenced in 1853.

HARRY.—Do not deceive yourself. He that will believe only what he can fully comprehend must have a very long head, or a very short creed. Many gain a false credit for liberality in religious matters, not from any tenderness they may have to the opinions or consciences of other men, but because they happen to have no opinion or conscience of their own.

BLACK EYED KATE.—You are in a curious strait. You say that you are on the point of marriage with one lover, and that your heart is in the possession of another, with whom you parted two years ago in anger, but who has now returned, and wishing to forget and forgive, is anxious to make you his wife. From your description of your first love, we should advise you to wed the second. We think you could hardly be happy with the jealous, passionate, and exacting Henry V.

FERTINAX.—1. Barbers existed at Rome in the third century, B.C. In England formerly the business of a surgeon was united to the barber's, and he was denominated the barber-surgeon. A London company was formed in 1538, and incorporated, 1661. This union was partially dissolved in 1540, and wholly so in 1745. 2. Cod liver oil was recommended as a remedy for chronic rheumatism by Doctor Percival, in 1782, and for diseases of the lungs about 1838. De Jough's treatise on cod liver oil was published in Latin in 1844, in English in 1849.

PERCIVAL V.—Decidedly it is easier for an Englishman to learn French than for a Frenchman to learn English. The pronunciation of our language is the great stumbling block in the way of foreigners. Witness the following verse, which appeared in a London paper in 1821. It appears to the eye to rhyme, but if you read it over you will discover the difficulty.

"Husband," says Joan, "tis plain enough
That Roger loves our daughter,
And Betty loves him too, although
She treats his suit with laughter.
For Roger always hems and coughs
While on the field he's ploughing;
Then strives to see between the boughs
If Betty heeds his coughing."

NIROE.—You are wrong to indulge in such morbid fancies. The world was not made for you alone. Rouse yourself, mix in pleasant, cheerful society, and try to banish from your mind the feeling of distrust towards those you meet with. You cannot expect to find every one good and truthful; but to condemn all for the faults

and shortcomings of a few, is not only wrong, but wicked. Think of your own imperfections, and those of your fellow creatures will seem less by comparison. You have wealth and accomplishments, and if you take our advice you will soon gain the love and esteem of your friends.

A YOUNG BLUE-STOCKING.—We do not wonder that your nerves are in a bad state. They cannot be otherwise as long as you make a practice of sitting up so late at night, and drinking green tea. Desist from this at once, or you may do yourself irreparable injury. Try a course of tonics, avoid excessive study, and if you do this and get change of air, your present morbid and dangerous condition will soon be altered.

MYRA.—We are surprised that your parents should allow you to attend theatres with a gentleman who is but a recent acquaintance, and who is nothing to you, or, under the circumstances, ever likely to be. Exercise a little of your own good sense, tell your parents candidly you do not like the gentleman in question, and his views. We are much mistaken if they do not see their error in allowing a man who is evidently a free thinker, to be the companion and chaperon of a young, impulsive girl of seventeen. We give you every credit for sense and prudence, and are glad that you have perceived the danger in time to escape.

MIDSHIPMAN.—1. Homer is the earliest profane writer who speaks of the tides. Pausanias, of Apamea, accounted for the tides from the motion of the moon about 79 a.c., and Caesar speaks of them in his fourth book of the Gallic war. The theory of the tides was first satisfactorily explained by Kepler, in 1598; but the honour of a complete examination of them was reserved for Sir Isaac Newton, about 1683. 2. It was in 1865 that the confederate privateer did such damage. They captured and destroyed about 50 federal vessels. The name of the captain was Waddell.

TIMOTHY.—1. It is by no means funny, and we are astonished a young man of your age cannot find better amusement than teasing your sister's pets. It is not only contemptible and cruel, but wicked in the extreme to torture dumb animals that are powerless to help themselves. Timothy should turn over a new leaf: he should try and improve his mind by a judicious course of study, so as to fit him for something better in life than tormenting his sister's feathered favourites. Timothy is losing valuable time, and if he does not commence at once and be "up and doing," he will be a ninny all his life. 2. Handwriting, scrawly and careless.

L. H. G.—What is called the Positive Philosophy was set forth by Auguste Comte, an eminent mathematician, born about 1795, and died at Paris in 1852. It sets aside theology and metaphysics as two merely preliminary stages in life, and abandons all search after causes and essences of things, and restricts itself to the observation and classification of phenomena and the discovery of their laws. Comte asserted that Europe had now arrived at the third stage of its progress. He aimed at being the founder of a new religion as well as a new philosophy—"the religion of humanity."

MESMERIST.—Fredrick Anthony Mesmer, a German physician of Mersburg, published his doctrines on mesmerism in 1766, contending, by a thesis on planetary influence, that the heavenly bodies diffused through the universe a subtle fluid which acts on the nervous system of animated beings. Quitting Vienna for Paris, in 1776, he gained numerous proselytes to his system in France, where he received a subscription of 340,000 livres. The government appointed a committee of physicians and members of the Academy of Sciences, to investigate his pretensions. Among these were Franklin and Bailly, and the results appeared in an admirable paper drawn up by the latter, 1784, exposing the futility of animal magnetism as the delusion was then termed. Mesmerism excited attention again about 1845, when Miss Harriet Martineau and others announced their belief in it.

TRABLER.—You are quite correct. Pigeons were employed as carriers by the ancients. When they took a long journey they carried two pigeons with them. When they thought proper to write to their friends, they let one of these birds loose with letters fastened to its neck. The bird, once released, would never cease its flight till it arrived at its nest and young ones. Thurosthenes announced to his father his victory at the Olympic games by sending to him at Egina a pigeon stained with purple. Arctius and Brutus corresponded by means of pigeons at the siege of Modena. In modern times the most noted were the pigeons of Aleppo, which served as couriers at Alexandria and Bagdad. Thirty-two pigeons sent to Antwerp were liberated from London at 7 o'clock in the morning, and on the same day at noon one of them arrived at Antwerp.

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